

## **Found in Translation: Franco-Irish translation relationships in nineteenth-century Ireland**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Various studies of the long-standing relationship between French and Irish cultures have provided multiple evidence of mutual exchange. Yet, the role played by translation and translators has been largely neglected. Reflecting my PhD research on Franco-Irish translation relationships in nineteenth-century Ireland, this article aims at redressing this omission. First, this essay will present an overview of research methods, issues and findings, outlining what an investigation of Ireland's translation holdings can reveal concerning the Franco-Irish relationship. Without such a research, the view we have today of past literary relations between Ireland and France may otherwise come as distorted. This article will then introduce one key moment of Franco-Irish translation contact in the nineteenth century. This case study is drawn from the field of religious translation. It outlines the importance of agency in the process and provides us with an opportunity to discuss some gender issues in translation. The present study is situated at an interdisciplinary crossroads between the fields of Translation Studies, History and Franco-Irish Studies, highlighting the contribution which Translation History can make to each of these disciplines.

**KEYWORDS:** agents of translation, Catholicism, Franco-Irish relationships, Irish translators, Mary Anne Sadlier, Mary Hackett, Nineteenth Century, non-biblical religious translation, translation from French, translation history, women translators.

### **Introduction**

Two main concerns form the basis of this article. Firstly, the purpose is to redress the omission of translation as a channel of influence and of translators as agents of cultural change in Franco-Irish history. Several studies of the Franco-Irish relationship have brought our attention to noteworthy literary and political influences. Yet, translation has been largely neglected as a contribution to this relationship and to Hiberno-French cultural developments. While there are various ways in which translation from French has contributed to the development of Irish culture, the present essay will introduce mainly one significant aspect of the Franco-Irish translation relationship in the nineteenth century. This case study is drawn from the field of non-Biblical religious translation and gives us an opportunity to discuss the importance of agency as well as explore some gender perspectives in translation. Secondly, this article is concerned with the idea of “presentism”<sup>1</sup> in literary history, strictly in the sense that translation history can be a tool to adjust our perspective on past cultural exchanges. Indeed, the underlying argument is that without such a research, the view we have today of past literary relations between, for instance, Ireland and France, may otherwise appear distorted. This article will therefore identify key moments of Franco-Irish translation contact in the nineteenth century, as well as signal the dangers of presentism in writing the cultural and political history of earlier historical periods. While the field of translation studies has benefited from the import of various social and cultural theories for a better understanding of

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<sup>1</sup> Presentism is here broadly understood as a tendency to interpret the past in terms of present-day knowledge and values. The present article does not, however, necessarily take the “anti-presentist” side in the wider debate of “Presentism” versus “Historicism”. On this debate, see for instance Spoerhase (2008).

translation, this essay focuses on translation as a historical object, and is based on a research that is both contextual and descriptive. In other words, though not excluding other perspectives, this project supports the idea that historical studies of translation can generate added knowledge from within. An interdisciplinary field by essence, translation history can in turn bring new perspectives to other disciplines, notably historical, literary and sociocultural studies.

## **Presentation of the research**

### *The translation island project<sup>2</sup>*

The PhD project on which this article is based is part of a wider programme of research which aims to increase knowledge and develop resources with regards to themes such as ‘Ireland in the world’ and ‘the world in Ireland’. This *translation island* theme is based on the idea that Ireland indeed has had a long history of translation, both in the inward and outward directions. With the present project in particular, the research programme proposes to explore the impact of writings in other languages on the development of Irish culture.

### *Methodology: agency and context*

Here, the concept of *relationship* is particularly central to this research, not only because the term ‘relationship’ recalls a long history of mutual interrelations between the French and Irish cultures, but because it implies a multiple-way process. We are not just looking at the effect brought about by translations from French, but also the translators’ personal agency and the impact of the receiving culture on the translation process. Furthermore, the notion of translator agency is expanded here to that of ‘agents of translation’ as proposed by Milton and Bandia (2009:1). In other words, we are not just looking at translators, but we acknowledge the importance of other actors in the process such as publishers, booksellers or magazines.

This investigation of Franco-Irish translation relationships in nineteenth-century Ireland is based on a survey of Ireland’s library holdings in translation from French. Based on the results, an analysis of overall socio-historical trends in nineteenth-century translation of French writing in Ireland was conducted. This article will highlight parts of this analysis. In order to understand these results, we are looking at various quantitative and qualitative aspects, such as the main areas of interest, popular authors or popular works. Nineteenth-century catalogues and periodicals are also taken into account for what they can tell us about patterns in translation. Ultimately, the data is examined in correlation with Ireland’s history and with any relevant contextual information regarding language, print culture and book trade.

The overall methodology used throughout this research consists of a combination of approaches. It is based on the conceptual framework principally underlying works by translation scholars such as Cronin (1996), Tymoczko (1999), Delisle (1999; 2002), France and Haynes (2006), and others. Firstly, the conceptual framework relates, as argued in this essay, to the importance of translation history for understanding earlier societies. Historical studies of translation can provide us with an often overlooked perspective on human developments occurring in various areas such as culture, politics, religion or science. Secondly, it relates to the importance of the human story behind translation. In other words,

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<sup>2</sup> The PRTL (Programme for Research in Third-Level Institutions) funding for this research was awarded for three years through An Foras Feasa, the Institute for Research in Irish Historical and Cultural Traditions. This project is the result of a partnership between DCU-based CTTS (Centre for Translation and Textual Studies) and SALIS (School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies), and Maynooth-based An Foras Feasa.

such a conceptual framework underlines issues of agency and the part played by translators in the development of languages, literatures, national identities, sciences or political ideas. In this respect, the sociohistorical dimension of translation is foregrounded, thereby paying due attention to what Simeoni referred to as “the view from the agent” (1995:445). Thirdly, this research is closely concerned with ideology and postcolonial contexts in translation.

Translations are related to texts and contexts, involving reflecting, rewriting, resisting or reacting to them. As Hermans puts it, “the citational nature of the term ‘translation’ obliges us to probe its social, cultural and historical dimension if we are to ascertain its force” (1999:158). Translation can be seen as an act of representation (Tymoczko 2005:1091) and a “cultural political practice” (Venuti 1992:9). Accordingly, the study of translation may unveil hints of ideological undertones in the text as well as in the choice of texts. Such conceptual frame is crucial to our understanding of the Franco-Irish relationship, particularly because it can help us determine what image of the French culture(s) was projected through translation. Furthermore, it allows us to understand better the nature of the impact of translation from French and the personal agency of translators and other players in the process.

In addition to the conceptual underpinnings mentioned so far, essays in the field of Franco-Irish studies have provided models of intercultural exchange and study which this research can reflect on and add to. These studies are the following: Rafroidi et al. (1974), Maher and Neville (2004), Maher *et al.* (2007), and Conroy (2009), as well as those contained in publications such as *Études Irlandaises*. This is what we refer to as the Franco-Irish motivation. This research is indeed motivated by the importance of showing how this time-honoured relationship between Ireland and the French-speaking regions and cultures “has grown and matured over the centuries” (Maher and Neville 2004b:18) and of carrying out research into the “neglected area of intellectual relations” between Ireland and France (Lee 2004:14).

With this overarching conceptual framework, the methodology is generally applied using the key questions suggested by Williams and Chesterman (2002:16). In other words, this research addresses questions of agency, product, motivation (or causation) and process, and it does so by investigating historical and contextual aspects, using both primary and secondary sources. These key points have equally been underscored by St-Pierre (1993) in his reformulation of Foucault’s questions within the context of translation studies. Indeed, St-Pierre (1993:62) argues that translation, as a discursive practice, can be assessed in the same way Foucault had examined discourse, that is, as an event subject to processes of controls and selections. Hence, St-Pierre (1993:67-68) points out that such a study is as much concerned with what is not translated as it is with what is translated. Questions of reception and target values are therefore crucial. St Pierre correlates such an approach in translation studies to the notion of ‘political criticism’, a term introduced by Mohanty:

Criticism is political, then, insofar as it does not restrict itself to internal readings of texts but looks at the *uses* to which texts are put, examining the connections between texts and the societies in which they are produced and consumed. Extending this definition beyond purely literary works to include those in other fields – law, medicine, politics and political theory, the arts and sciences, for example – we can find in the study of translation an area of particular interest for such an approach, inasmuch as translation brings different cultures into contact with each other. Through the transformation of texts originating in another context, translators – by their choices – make evident the discursive nature of

texts, the roles such texts are given to play within their own and foreign cultures (St Pierre 1993:69-70; emphasis in original).

Political criticism is highly relevant here because this investigation of Franco-Irish translation relationships is greatly concerned with “the uses to which texts are put”. In other words, the discursive nature of translations and the motives behind them are considered important for analyzing the historical shaping of the Franco-Irish relationship and for investigating the impact of translation from French on the development of Irish culture.

### *Interconnecting macro- and microhistory*

The aim here is therefore to conciliate both macro and micro approaches in the same analysis and to highlight interconnectedness. In other words, the interconnections of French and Irish histories are examined both from a general, macrohistorical point of view as well as from a microhistorical perspective whereby the histories of unknown or unacknowledged mediators come into play. Microhistory, which, observes Adamo, involves “recovering the voice of marginal subjects on the grounds of fragmented and apparently minor data” (2006:93), can contribute knowledge to larger historical narratives. On the other hand, macrohistorical perspectives allow us to situate these subjects within a wider framework.

The purpose is indeed to establish a connection between individual and collective narratives. Key political and cultural themes in the Franco-Irish relationship are exposed, and translation history, with its own perspectives on texts and agents of translation, is a valuable way of looking at the ways in which such themes have cut across cultures and national boundaries. While translation has generally been ignored or dismissed as insignificant in traditional histories, works by Welch (1988), Cronin (1996) and Tymoczko (1999) have established its historical importance in nineteenth-century Ireland. In this light, cultural history does not seem so unconnected from social and political history, and the historical role of previously neglected subjects needs to be discussed. The history of the Franco-Irish relationship in the nineteenth century is marked by particular movements of ideas. They relate to some of the main political and cultural debates in Ireland at the time, and we particularly need to see how Ireland’s agents of translation have contributed to these debates.

### *The local transcultural space in nineteenth-century Ireland: importance of context*

A number of technical and fundamental issues arise in translation history research. In particular, there are crucial questions which relate to defining the historical object and the scope of study, and which result in a need for basic working definitions, as recommended by Pym (1998:55-71). For instance, what are the source and target cultures? In many cases, such definitions are conceived in relation to the purpose and scope of our research. Hence, when we attempt to define the scope of the present study and determine the impact of translation from French in nineteenth-century Ireland, it is important to take into account Ireland’s political, cultural and economic circumstances during that period, its position as a colony within the British Empire and the increasing hegemony of English over the Irish language. In this context, translation from French was overwhelmingly performed into English, and not into Irish. In addition, the Act of Union (1800)<sup>3</sup> had an adverse effect on Ireland’s publishing and printing activity (O’Neill 1985:88; Ó Ciosáin 1997:56; Kinane 2002:23; Ferguson 2011:9). The publishing context and the print culture in nineteenth-century Ireland were such

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<sup>3</sup> This was the Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland which abolished the Irish parliament and incorporated Ireland into the United Kingdom.

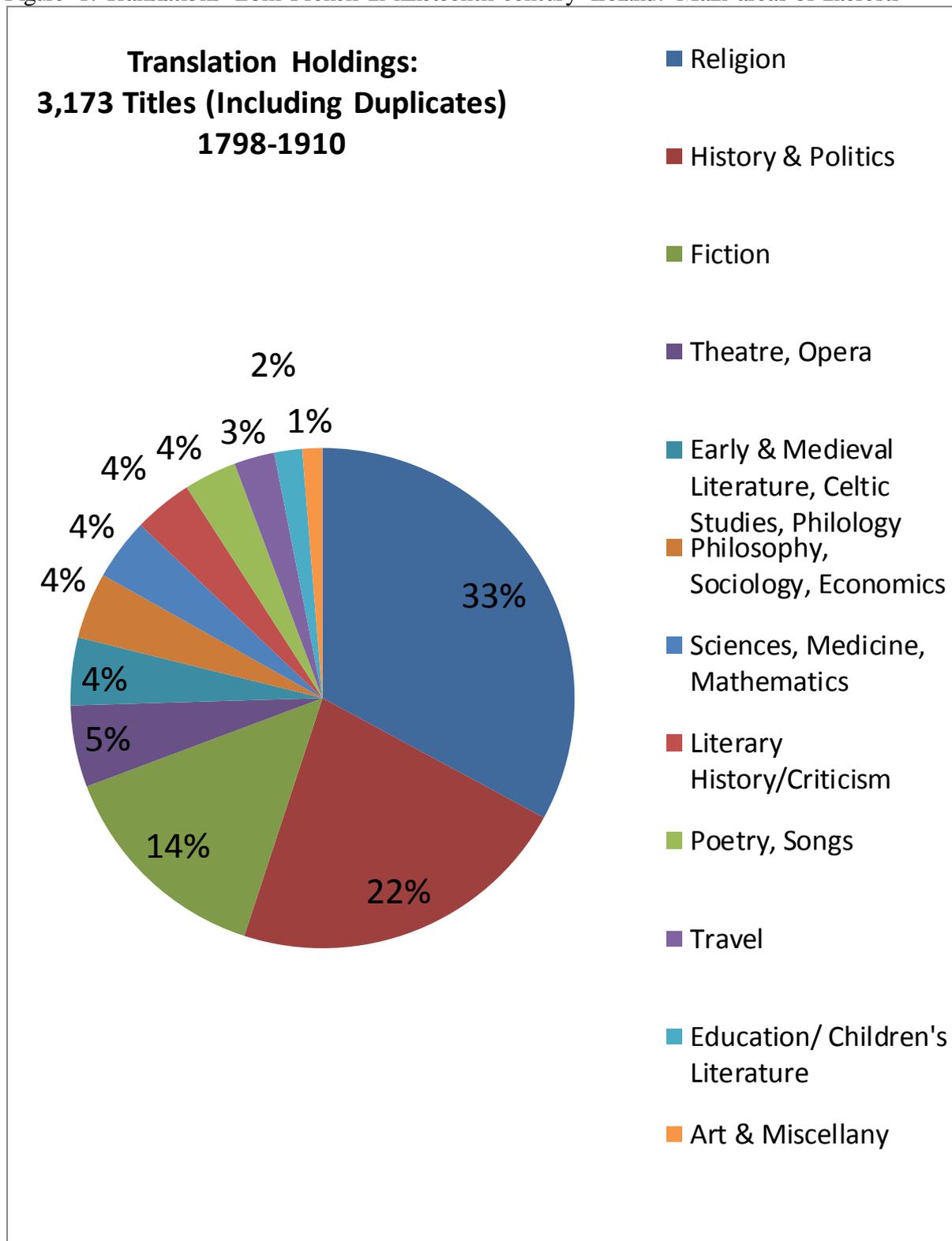
that many of the books available to Irish readers were in fact produced and published outside Ireland, mainly in London. In order to obtain a general view of what translated literature from French was available to Irish readers, this survey of Ireland's libraries therefore had to include all these publications from London and elsewhere which form an important part of the holdings. Yet, the aim of this study is to highlight the specificity of the Franco-Irish translation relationship, indeed to explore the *translation island* theme and, in Bastin's words (2006:124), to rehabilitate the local cultural – or transcultural – space independently from colonial visions. Such concern therefore results in the need, within the global survey, to highlight the particular input of Ireland's 'agents of translation' in the nineteenth century.

### **The survey: a different perspective on French-Irish past literary relations**

The present section provides a brief overview of the survey. This overview is based on a chart representing the main areas of interest in nineteenth-century translation from French. A total of over 3,000 items were recorded across Ireland's main library holdings. While a quantification of translated material in the nineteenth century can only be approximate, these results nevertheless give us a fair representation of the translation landscape in the period. The survey is inclusive. Firstly, libraries from all around the island were surveyed. Secondly, library collections which were predominantly Protestant or Catholic were both accounted for. Before presenting these findings, however, it may be useful to consider the view we generally have of nineteenth-century French writing, and the correlated perception we have of nineteenth-century translation from French. When we think about translation of nineteenth-century French literature, which authors or which genres do we tend to think of first? Looking at today's anthologies or encyclopaedias of French literature in English translation, as well as the various essays produced in the fields of literary and Franco-Irish studies, we may believe that the main areas of interest would have been poetry and the novel, with prominent names such as Baudelaire, Hugo, Balzac, Flaubert, Stendhal first coming to mind.

Yet, this investigation of Ireland's library holdings and nineteenth-century catalogues has unveiled quite a different picture. Figure 1 presents the main areas of interest in nineteenth-century translation of French writing. Note that, for the purpose of this research, it was necessary to determine the key domains, or categories, according to which the breakdown was to be given. These domains were chosen insofar as they could underline the main patterns. There are necessarily some overlaps which are not shown in this chart, for example between religion and history, or between education and fiction where what we usually refer to as 'Children's Literature' could form an overlapping section. For this reason, the area of Children's Literature is in fact larger than it appears on the chart.

Figure 1. Translations from French in nineteenth-century Ireland: Main areas of interests<sup>4</sup>



<sup>4</sup> Percentages are only here to give an idea of the overall breakdown and should not be taken as definitive figures, particularly where the difference between two categories is small. While the total number of items on which this breakdown is based is 3,173, the actual number of translations is estimated accordingly at about 2,200.

The chart clearly shows that, although fictional literature indeed makes up a significant portion of the translated works, it is however well outmatched by non-fictional literature, at least from a quantitative point of view. Furthermore, by looking at the chart, there is no doubt that non-fictional works related to religion, history and politics constitute the main areas of interest. These categories represent more than half of the entire corpus of translations. In fact, a closer look at fictional literature has revealed that a great part of the translated novels belong to the historical and religious genres.

Moreover, in the field of poetry, those authors who were most prominent in translation do not seem to match the vision we have today of nineteenth-century French poetry. Indeed, poets such as Baudelaire or Rimbaud, to name only two among those who are most widely read and studied today, are virtually non-existent in nineteenth-century translation. An interest in these writers was beginning to grow towards the close of the century, but translations were usually produced, and read, outside Ireland. Lafcadio Hearn, for instance, who was probably the most prolific Irish translator of Romantic and late nineteenth-century French literature, particularly of short stories, published most of his renditions in the United States where he resided for some time. Apart from one or two monographs, all his translations from French were only available to New Orleans and New York readers, through magazine publications (Perkins and Perkins 2004).

Poets such as Delavigne, Desbordes-Valmore or Chénier are, on the other hand, rarely mentioned today. Yet, selections from their verse appear in works by Irish translators and were available to an Irish audience, particularly through newspaper contributions. Most strikingly, Pierre Jean de Béranger, who undoubtedly was the most popular and translated poet in nineteenth-century Ireland, has now been largely forgotten, both in Ireland and in France. At the time, very few books of translated poetry were published, and even fewer were those monographs dedicated to one single foreign author.<sup>5</sup> Yet, two small collections of Béranger's poetry translated by two Irish translators were found in the library holdings. An investigation of Ireland's periodicals gave additional evidence that Béranger indeed was a popular figure. In nineteenth-century Ireland, Béranger's name was commonly invoked as a model for other poets, similarly to that of Irish poet Thomas Moore. This research has helped identify about nineteen Irish men and women who have translated from Béranger during that period, and several more still remain unidentified.<sup>6</sup>

Certainly, writers such as Hugo, Lamartine, Chateaubriand and Dumas *père* were prominent figures in translation. However, translations from Hugo seem to have occurred more often in the fields of poetry and theatre than in the generally-assumed novel form. The names of Lamartine and Chateaubriand were prominent in the domain of poetry but so were they in the fields of history, politics or religion. Moreover, translations from novelists such as Flaubert or Stendhal were very scarce and only appeared in Ireland towards the close of the century, if at all. On the other hand, there were numerous translations and editions of historical novels by the writing duo Erckmann-Chatrion, many copies of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's early nineteenth-century romances, or various editions of Sophie Cottin's edifying story *Elizabeth; or, the exiles of Siberia*. In other words, a history of translated French literature in nineteenth-century Ireland inevitably brings us beyond the realms of canonical literature. It is clearly obvious, then, that the view we have today of French literature in the nineteenth century,

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<sup>5</sup> Translations from modern languages were usually included in works of original poetry, sometimes signalled in the title, sometimes not.

<sup>6</sup> A chapter of my PhD thesis is therefore devoted to the reception of, and translations from, Béranger in nineteenth-century Ireland.

which is often based on literary canons, does not necessarily reflect the patterns of translation during that period. And it is therefore certain that surveys in translation history can help us adjust, and indeed widen, our perspective on past literary exchanges.

The survey of sociohistorical trends in translation from French is so vast that, for the purpose of this article, we wish to focus on one key moment of Hiberno-French translation contact. In the following section, the role played by Ireland's agents of translation in the Franco-Irish relationship is illustrated with an example drawn from the domain of religious translation. As we can see from the chart, religion indeed clearly represents a key area of interest in translation from French in nineteenth-century Ireland.

## **Mary Anne Sadlier, Mary Hackett, and other key agents of translation: the French-Irish Catholic connection**

### *Making the connection*

One of the most prolific Irish translators of French works in the nineteenth-century was Mary Anne Sadlier, usually referred to as 'Mrs. J. Sadlier'. Overall, she may have produced at least twenty translations, all of which were intended to promote Catholic values and beliefs. Mary Anne Sadlier [or Sadleir], née Madden (1820–1903), is mostly known as a prolific author of Catholic and patriotic novels, as well as religious tracts. She was born in County Cavan but having lost both her parents by the age of 24, she moved to Canada where she met and married James Sadlier (Welch 1996:506). James was co-owner with his brother Denis of a leading New York Catholic publishing house, D. & J. Sadlier. They too had emigrated from Ireland. This was indeed a time of great poverty in Ireland, with few economic prospects, a situation which culminated in the Great Famine of 1845-49, with widespread death, disease, evictions and mass emigrations (Kinealy 2008:162-164). Though almost forgotten today, particularly in Ireland, Mary Anne was, according to Fanning, the most influential writer of the Famine generation in America (1990:114), and her works, both originals and translations, were indeed available in Ireland too.

Fanning, whose studies of Irish-American literature are valuable in giving a voice to forgotten writers, observes that Mary Anne's works are characterized by "an unshakeable identification of Ireland and Catholicism" (1990:117) which is rooted in the Ireland of 'saints and scholars', and by a certain amount of conservatism. Her translations from French are mostly works of Catholic instruction, devotion and biography as well as several Catholic tales. She particularly believed in the power of fictional religious tales, with which she hoped 'to reach those who will not read pious or devotional books' (preface to *Aunt Honor's Keepsake, A Chapter from Life* [1866], cited in Fanning 1990:120). Indeed, she believed that such moral and didactic stories were doing even 'more good, and exercising a more marked influence on the minds of ordinary people, than works of either instruction or devotion' (ibid.).

The post-famine era in Ireland has been described as a time when Irish Catholicism was marked by religious renewal and the Catholic Church became stronger (Corish 1985:233-234; Larkin 1997:7). We can therefore suggest that Mary Anne Sadlier's productions, mostly published through the Sadlier firm, had a double impact. While both her own writings and her translations were primarily designed for the moral edification of her Irish emigrant readership, and to promote Irish Catholic values in Protestant North America, a strong argument can be made for the active part she also played in the strengthening of Catholicism in her native land.

Through Sadlier's work, we can see the conjunction of two major movements in nineteenth-century Ireland, that of Catholicism and Irish nationalism. The contribution made by the

Sadlier family, and by other agents of translation, to this development needs to be addressed. Firstly, as it became clear from this survey, not only did translations of religious works form a considerable percentage of the overall body of translations, but they were in the Catholic vein for the great part. These translations helped build up and develop the wider body of Catholic works in nineteenth-century Ireland. They were predominantly devotional books, religious biographies and histories, Catholic tales and apologetics. We may therefore suggest that this growing body of Catholic literature should be considered in the light of the religious renewal, a phenomenon which has been described by Larkin as the ‘Devotional Revolution’ (1997:57-89). The strengthening of the Irish Catholic Church in the latter half of the century can also be seen as a late Catholic Reformation, or, to use Murphy’s term (1984), the ‘Irish counter-reformation’. In fact, one key element in translation of French Catholic writing is an expressed concern for greater conformity with Tridentine doctrine and practice<sup>7</sup> and for strengthening the link with Rome. This is evident from many authors’ and translators’ prefatory remarks. Moreover, based on this survey of Ireland’s library holdings, seventeenth-century post-Tridentine French preachers such as Bossuet were still very popular in translation throughout the nineteenth century.

In fact, while nineteenth-century France may have often been described as ‘godless’ following the French Revolution and its attack on religion and the Church, a religious revival did occur there too, particularly between 1830 and 1860 (Tombs 1996:135; 241-248). What is more, French Catholic writings were often prevailing in the overall body of contemporary Catholic literature, with key figures such as Chateaubriand, Lacordaire, Lamennais, Montalembert and others. Montalembert’s *Histoire de sainte Elisabeth de Hongrie, duchesse de Thuringe* (1836) was translated as *Life of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Duchess of Thuringia* (c1849) by another Irish translator, a certain Mary Hackett, ‘late a pupil of the Ursulines, St Mary’s Convent, Waterford’. The translation was given an assessment in the *Dublin Review* in 1849. The reviewer’s religious standpoint is unmistakable with regards to the task of the translator: ‘If the translator fail in faith, his work will seem to be an imperfect version of the original, no matter what amount of talent, or of knowledge, may be brought to its accomplishment’ (‘Notice of Books’ 1849:527-528). But Mary Hackett seems to have fulfilled this task, and the glowing review is telling:

Miss Hackett has brought to her task the true, firm, unshrinking, and unabashed faith, of an Irish Catholic – a faith which sets at equal defiance the sneer of infidelity and the scorn of heresy – that is prepared alike to defy them in this day, as in the days that are passed away, it defied the sword and the torch of the persecutor (1849:528).

The translator’s religious persuasion is therefore foregrounded here as a decisive element in the translation process, and the *Dublin Review* examines and promotes Hackett’s work with a Catholic nationalist perspective of Ireland’s religious and political history. The Dublin publisher of *The Life of St. Elizabeth of Hungary* was James Duffy. According to Leerssen (1996:3), Duffy’s firm dominated the nationalist and Catholic book trade in Ireland in the second half of the nineteenth century. Duffy brought out “a number of highly successful religious books at popular prices” (Casteleyn 1984:150). He also published several authors of the Young Ireland movement, a key Irish nationalist movement in the 1840s, as well as “inexpensive nationalist literature” (Kinane 2002:26). It is no coincidence, then, that Duffy’s firm reissued some of Sadlier’s works in Ireland. In fact, he was one of the main publishers of

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<sup>7</sup> Conforming to the Council of Trent (1545-1563).

translations of French Catholic writing in nineteenth-century Ireland. The second point, then, as made clear by the reviewer of Hackett's translation, the work of Sadlier as well as Duffy's publishing activities, is the impact of these agents of translation, including Hackett's reviewer, on the development of Irish nationalism. In particular, their publications and activities played a role in bringing closer together Irish Catholicism and Irish nationalism.

Through her literary endeavours, Mary Anne Sadlier helped strengthen the link between Irish national identity and Roman Catholicism, in America as well as back home, and the role played by the Sadliers' publishing company in this process should be taken into account too. In this sense, the Sadlier family provides us with a fine example of dual agency in translation. The publishers' agency becomes even clearer from the following extract of 'Preface to the Youth's Catholic Library', which was added to Mary Anne's translation entitled *The Pope's Niece, and Other Tales* (1862). The Sadlier's enterprise is in great part neatly summarized here, particularly as regards their intent as well as their choices of French sources:

Under this head we intend publishing a series of entertaining and instructive books, which Catholic parents may safely place in the hands of their children. [...] The tales in this series are from various French authors – most of them from Balleydier, whose brilliant sketches of life in its different phases are deservedly popular in France at the present day, on account of the sound principles of religion and morality on which his writings are based (1862:7-8).

In other words, the Sadliers' approach to translations was largely based on moral and religious grounds. In this respect, the above-quoted preface is significant because it points to the careful selection of texts deemed appropriate for the Catholic youth. Translating Catholic tales was a means to counteract the influx of mistrusted non-Catholic fiction, which is implied by the term 'safely'. Accordingly, these choices which were made in the translation and publication of children's literature reflect well contemporary concerns and debates over denominational and non-denominational education.

On a more general note, as evidenced by this research, translation from French in nineteenth-century Ireland shows significant trends in non-Biblical religious translation. This is particularly significant for the field of translation studies, because until now, the focus has mostly been on the study of Biblical translation, as far as religious translation is concerned. Certainly, the study of Biblical translation by scholars such as Nida has brought to light much valuable material to the field of translation studies, notably Nida's *Toward a science of translating* (1964). Yet, there is an entire body of translations with religious intent, but non-Biblical, which deserves special attention too.

### *Gender perspectives*

The role played by translators such as Mary Anne Sadlier and Mary Hackett is equally significant from the point of view of gender studies, particularly with regards to the position of women in the world of letters and their active involvement in major cultural and ideological developments. Firstly, Sadlier and Hackett present us with a case in point regarding female translators' invisibility, or 'semi-invisibility' in this case. While the invisible status of translators, male and female, has often been highlighted by translation scholars, women translators in the nineteenth century were often in a situation of double invisibility. Even though Mary Anne Sadlier is not wholly invisible since she is acknowledged on title pages as the translator or writer, and her biography is available to us today, she was nonetheless usually identified as 'Mrs. J. Sadlier'. The loss of her *forename*, replaced by the

mark of her married status prefixed to her husband's initial and surname is revealing. On the title page, she is not so much Mary Anne anymore, rather James Sadlier's wife. Although there are several cases where a woman's full name is acknowledged, this nevertheless remains a very typical pattern for married women translators. One way of looking at this pattern is by referring to the historical association between "women" and "translation", that is, the idea that women and translations were traditionally seen as subordinate and derivative (Simon 1996:1; 39). Hence, in this particular case "the wife of" may be heard as an echo of "the translation of". As for Mary Hackett, she belongs to a long list of obscure translators whose biographical details remain unknown to this day, though this is true of many male translators too. Yet, while nineteenth-century male translators may be as often invisible and unacknowledged as their female counterparts, they, however, retain their own initials and/or names when being acknowledged for their work. In fact, the names of those who are accredited for their work on title pages are often given with titles and credentials, for example, 'the Right Reverend William Walsh, Bishop of Nova Scotia', or 'the Rev. H.H. Harte, M.A., late Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin'.<sup>8</sup> How indeed could a woman's intellectual and professional achievements be acknowledged in the nineteenth century when, in the first place, women were not allowed to access academic realms, nor any religious or political hierarchy? At best she may be recognized as the author or translator of another work. Furthermore, women's position in the profession of translators was often correlated to their educational and intellectual treatment. In particular, the exclusion of women from classical translation shows a continuation from the translation tradition in the eighteenth century as described by Agorni (2005:819-821). "As a consequence, their efforts were confined to contemporary European languages" (2005:819), observes Agorni. Yet women translators were thereby able to develop a translation tradition of close contact with wider European currents of thought. Interestingly, as we can see, for example, from the review of Hackett's work, translations appear to have carried significance for critics and readers, since they were discussed in the public sphere. Invisibility, from this point of view, is a relative matter. Title pages give evidence of gendered discourse and gender difference, but female translators were nonetheless making an impact through their works.

Accordingly, Mary Anne Sadlier's particularly active involvement in Irish Catholic publishing appears significant from a gender-related perspective. Kilfeather's (2002) viewpoint on Irish women's writing may provide us with additional insights into the contribution by female translators to cultural and political developments in nineteenth-century Ireland. As she compares the history of women's writing in various places in the world, Kilfeather observes that "in each case there is a sudden explosion of women's writing within a decade of significant political upheaval and social instability, when print has been harnessed to disseminate revolutionary ideas through the nation's imagined community" (2002:772). Though the works of Sadlier and Hackett span a period larger than a decade, it is nevertheless interesting to look at their undertakings from this angle of a "crisis" situation. Indeed, we can sense in Sadlier's work that behind her original works and translations, there is an impelling motive which corresponds to a matter of urgency. She felt that there was an immediate need to consolidate the Catholic faith, both in Ireland and among Irish-American immigrants. On the subject of Ireland, particularly in relation to the Famine, much of her anger is directed towards Protestant proselytizing and 'souperism'<sup>9</sup>, which she perceived as a threat (Fanning 1990:117). The wider sociohistorical context should be taken into account too. Since the enforcement of the Penal Laws<sup>10</sup> in the late seventeenth century, and until Catholic

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<sup>8</sup> Respectively, translators of *Meditations for Every Day in the Year* by Henri Griffet and of *System of the World*, a scientific work by Pierre Simon Laplace.

<sup>9</sup> A term referring to the practice of offering food to Catholics as an inducement to convert to Protestantism.

<sup>10</sup> Statutes imposing restrictions on Catholics and Protestant dissenting groups.

Emancipation was won in 1829, Catholics had been excluded from the political life of the country. Although the great majority of the population was Catholic, the Anglican Church remained, however, the established Church until 1869 (Kinealy 2008:154-156; 181).

On the American side, Sadlier feared that Irish immigrants might quickly abandon their Catholic faith in favour of the secular and progressive values of North American urban society, particularly through Protestant-controlled public schooling (Fanning 1990:114-140). In the name of religion, family and ethnicity, she aimed to help her emigrant readers “in their arduous struggle with the tempter, whose nefarious design of bearing them from the faith of their fathers, is so artfully concealed under every possible disguise” (cited in Fanning 1990:118). Furthermore, the translation tradition of women such as Sadlier and Hackett could be considered in the light of the crucial part generally played by women in the development of Catholicism in the nineteenth century, particularly in relation to devotional, educational, congregational and philanthropic practices. Paradoxically, observes Simon, “religion (which reinforced the subservience of women) emerges as an area through which some women were able to contribute to the cultural activities of their age” (2000:27). Moreover, the fact that Mary Anne Sadlier closely associates Irish national identity with Roman Catholicism corresponds to a wider movement of Irish Catholic nation-building in the nineteenth century.

An investigation of women translators in nineteenth-century Ireland may certainly be fruitful with regards to cultural nationalism, particularly from the point of view of Kilfeather’s above-mentioned theory. Hence, three women stood out for their contributions to the *Nation*, organ of the Young Ireland movement as well as a significant advertising platform for Catholic publishers such as Duffy. These women were ‘Speranza’ (Jane Francesca Elgee, Lady Wilde), ‘Eva’ (Mary Anne Kelly) and ‘Mary’ (Ellen Mary Downing). Not only did their poetical contributions to the newspaper the *Nation* take on particular significance in the crucial decade of the 1840s, which were marked by the Great Famine, by campaigns for repeal of the Act of Union and by the revolutionary upheavals of 1848,<sup>11</sup> but translations formed an important aspect of Speranza’s and Eva’s literary productions. Cronin (2002:269-287) highlights the internationalistic outlook of Speranza’s nationalism, and points out that for her, translation provided a connection between Ireland and the European continent and a means of disseminating ideas. In fact, some of Speranza’s translations were from Lamartine, a major figure in the revolution of 1848 in France, and Eva translated several poems from the French of Béranger, who was a populist, nationalist and republican figure in the first half of the century (Lyons 2008:29-30). It is therefore certain that, even in the case of Mary Anne Sadlier for whom financial necessity was an important motive, the women translators mentioned in this essay became involved in the profession of letters for more than just leisure, fame or money. Despite their doubly invisible status as translators and as women in a patriarchal society, they played a pro-active part in major cultural and political developments, at a critical time in Irish history.

## Conclusions

Translators and publishers such as the Sadlier family played a decisive role in the dissemination of French Catholic writings in nineteenth-century Ireland. There are many other ‘agents of translation’ who played a similar role and whose contribution deserves proper investigation. Many of these were clergymen or members of teaching or monastic orders. Some of them were even actively involved in Catholic politics in nineteenth-century Ireland.

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<sup>11</sup> See for example the first lines of Eva’s ‘Loyalty’: ‘I’ll not leave old Ireland Tho’ fallen she may be, I’ll not leave poor Ireland, Until she is free’ (the *Nation*, 1847)

While the strengthening of the Irish Catholic Church in the second half of the nineteenth century is generally correlated with a stronger link with Rome, we may now allow for the possibility that an influence of French Catholic writing was exerted through the channel of translation. In this regard, translations from French Catholic writers can be seen as part of a wider phenomenon in the nineteenth century, a general, transnational Catholic movement. Within this transnational network, particular developments occurred in Ireland in relation to Irish Catholicism and Irish nationalism. The contribution by Ireland's agents of translation to transnational and national movements should not be dismissed as insignificant. Through their various activities, they formed a network of discursive practices which carries historical weight. Indeed, these practices are not completely unconnected from Daniel O'Connell's campaigns<sup>12</sup> in the first half of the century, through which he had drawn Irish Catholicism and nationalism closely together (Welch 1988:75), nor from later developments in Ireland whereby, according to Collins, "the Roman Catholic Church took upon itself the role of 'keepers of Ireland's historical identity'" (2002:29). In the light of these findings, we can therefore safely argue that translation history can provide new and valuable perspectives to the general field of history, and to Irish and Franco-Irish studies in particular.

With regard to translation studies, such an investigation is equally important. Translation history brings new perspectives to translation as it helps build up the overall body of knowledge useful for further developments in the field. In particular, the case study presented in this article brings the focus to a whole area of religious translation which has so far been neglected in translation studies, that of non-Biblical religious translation. In the context of nineteenth-century Ireland, as well as in other cultures and times, the production, publication and assessment of such texts present a whole range of discursive practices which is valuable material for translation studies.

Moreover, notwithstanding the role played by Irish male translators as agents of cultural change, the particular case of female translators in nineteenth-century Ireland provides interesting material for studies of gender in translation, as well as for gender studies in general. In particular, their active role in political and religious developments in nineteenth-century Ireland needed to be addressed, because attention has been traditionally given to clergymen, male scholars and politicians as key agents of cultural and political change. On the basis of this research study, Irish women translators were instrumental in bringing European writings to an English-reading audience. Moreover, gendered discourse in translation, and, as illustrated above, the position of women in the world of letters, are relevant to general and historical considerations of gender.

This article, then, has sought to demonstrate the contribution that translation history can make to other areas of intellectual inquiry, and particularly to historical and literary studies. In this regard, research in translation history can help us adjust our perspectives on earlier periods and materials, thereby preventing distorted, overly "presentist" views of past cultural relations. This is best exemplified in this article, not only by the overall survey results, but also by the significance of translation from poets such as Béranger in nineteenth-century Ireland. In other words, while attention is more commonly paid to nineteenth-century writers such as Baudelaire or Flaubert, translation trends show that figures such as Béranger were popular in translation even though they have now been largely forgotten. Additionally, the importance of religious translation in the Franco-Irish relationship has been overlooked until

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<sup>12</sup> O'Connell, Irish nationalist leader, campaigned for Catholic Emancipation, which was won in 1829, and for Repeal of the Union.

now, and therefore needed to be highlighted for a greater understanding of the history of this relationship.

In turn, as Bandia argues, after Berman, the field of translation history gains from including various histories and historical perspectives in order to ensure “pluralism as a basis for constituting a truly comprehensive history of translation” (2006:45). The research presented here explores vast uncharted territories and gives translators, as well as other actors in the translation process, due recognition as agents of history. Not only does the present study provide a new interpretation of past Franco-Irish relations, but the data generated through this research could undoubtedly provide a source for further investigations and interpretations. For example, scholars may be interested in exploring specific translation clusters in more detail, or in including the perspective of translation to the study of particular individuals or topics. Accordingly, there are several agents of translation prominent in this research who are not particularly known for the part they played in the production and dissemination of translations from French, such as James Duffy for example. This aspect of their life and works could therefore be included in new or already existing biographies. This too illustrates the fact that, while drawing information from other fields such as history or sociocultural studies, translation history can generate added knowledge from within. In other words, surveys in translation history can enhance our knowledge of known or unknown individuals or groups. They also provide valuable information on publishing and reading trends, and translations may reflect cultural and political trends in a given society at a given time. Another suggestion for further projects would be the creation, or the interlinking, of transnational and/or interdisciplinary research. For example, this survey, or some aspects of it, could be linked to other investigations of nineteenth-century writing and translation, either in Ireland or across several cultures. Transnational or cross-cultural perspectives to various topics, such as religion, politics, sciences or philology, could thereby be developed. The list of possibilities seems endless.

To conclude, this article has sought to redress the omission of translation as a contributory factor in Hiberno-French cultural developments. There are many more narratives in the history of the Franco-Irish relationship which are waiting to be explored, unveiled and (inter)connected. Indeed, not only were Ireland’s agents of translation numerous in the domain of religion in the nineteenth century, but there were also some significant contributions in the areas of history and politics, fiction, children’s literature, sciences, philology and other various fields. Ultimately, they may be eloquent reflections of the rich and complex processes of transcultural contact.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> It is hoped that the large amount of bio-bibliographical data which has been generated through this research will someday be available as open source information. To this end, CTTS at Dublin City University is intending to provide the online facilities (TRASNABIO) necessary for sharing this knowledge. Accordingly, I wish to acknowledge the valuable role played by An Foras Feasa at Maynooth in fostering research in the digital age and increasing our awareness of database creation.

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