Limerick, el cual en el año 1989 se convertiría en la Universidad de Limerick. A lo largo de los años ochenta a todos los títulos concedidos por el Colegio Nacional de Arte y Diseño les fueron otorgados la condición de licenciatura bajo la autoridad del Consejo Nacional de Títulos Educativos, un organismo nacional para la concesión de licenciaturas establecido por el Estado en el año 1980. De manera independiente pero a la vez simultánea, la enseñanza del diseño se desarrollaba en gran número de nuevos Colegios Técnicos Regionales en toda Irlanda, construidos con la ayuda de la Comunidad Europea. En estos y en los dos antiguos colegios de arte de Dublín y Limerick, muchas disciplinas de diseño tenían lugar. En Belfast, la escuela de arte se hizo en primer lugar como parte de la Politécnica del Ulster, y después de la Universidad del Ulster. Se mantenía su tradicional base industrial de textiles, orfebrería y diseño gráfico.

En resumen, los debates y las controversias de los años sesenta han conducido al reconocimiento firme de la enseñanza del diseño en los establecimientos de educación de las artes en toda Irlanda, lo cual ha sido reflejado en las licenciaturas y diplomas otorgados por el Consejo Nacional de Títulos Educativos. La industria también ha llegado a reconocer la importancia del diseño en el desarrollo de productos y en su comercialización. Los licenciados se colocaron sin dificultad, sobre todo en los campos de la moda, del diseño gráfico y del diseño industrial. Los artesanos tradicionales han encontrado ventas mayores para sus productos, que han sido fuertemente promocionados por el Consejo de Artesanía de Irlanda. El bienestar actual de la profesión del diseño se ve en el gran número de socios activos de la Sociedad de Diseñadores de Irlanda, que fue fundada en el año 1972 y que otorga reconocimiento profesional a los diseñadores irlandeses.

THE HISTORY OF DESIGN EDUCATION IN IRELAND

This is an outline history of the education of designers for industry in Ireland since the mid-eighteenth century. The economic circumstances of Ireland and government economic policy are presented as central formative influences. However, other causative factors, such as the climate of ideas and prevailing aesthetic currents are given due weight as influences on productive process. The history of design is presented solidly embedded in the general social economic and cultural history of the country.

Early eighteenth century Ireland had little industry and its agriculture was primitive. The series of religious wars, land confiscations and implantation of new landowners in the course of the seventeenth century, had damaged Irish economic life severely. However, at the end of the century one positive development was the influx of French Huguenot refugees fleeing the Catholic religious persecution of King Louis XIV of France. These artisans brought the skills of silk and linen weaving to Ireland.[1] High quality craftsmen such as the Tabary Brothers introduced the north European Baroque style of decorative woodcarving to Dublin and set a standard for native carvers. The organisation of the crafts in Dublin and Cork was controlled by the Guilds, which were conservative in nature and did not spearhead technical or stylistic innovations. Craft innovation came from foreigners, like the Italian stuccadores in the 1750s, and later with English glass cutters. Up-to-date stylistic patterns were introduced by the Dublin Society School of Ornament.

The wealthy landowning aristocracy, gentry and higher clergy, were secure in the social and political settlement of Ireland by the 1730s. They sought to express their status in large country houses and city mansions which opened the way to the flowering of Irish Palladian architecture. There was now a rich market for all aspects of household furnishing, such as cabinet making, upholstery, curtains, carpets, glass and ceramics. The more intellectually aware of the gentry, informed by enlightenment ideals, realised that France led Europe in terms of luxury goods and that this depended on the aesthetic education of the craftsman as well as a training in manual skill. The travels of the nobility on the Grand Tour extended their artistic horizons and expectations of quality goods. This led in the 1740s for a call for education in drawing for manufacture.

The Dublin Society, founded in 1731, was one of the economic societies typical of Enlightenment Europe which were practical in aim and sought to develop industry and

1. See Longfield, A. K. (Mrs. Leask) «History of the Irish Linen and Cotton Printing Industry in the 18th Century», *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, vol. 67, 1937, pp. 26-56. See Cullen, Louis, *An Economic History of Ireland*, Batsford, 1987, 2nd. ed., which provides a general economic survey.

agriculture as a means of building up national wealth.[2] The Society was given annual financial grants by the Irish Parliament for such purposes, including the promotion of the silk, woollen and linen weaving industries centred in Dublin and Belfast. Although the eighteenth century Irish Parliament was open only to an oligarchy of Protestant landowners, it did develop its own colonial patriotism and sought to assert its autonomy in the political and economic spheres. A standard Enlightenment method of encouraging production was by offering cash prizes. The Reverend Dr. Samuel Madden offered prizes through the Dublin Society for a wide range of industrial products from 1740 onwards, such as gilt-leather, flowered carpets, earthenware, pottery, lace and embroidery. Apart from rewarding successful producers, Madden saw the education of young trade apprentices as important for the generation of good quality patterns. Consequently, in 1746, he offered prizes «to such boys and girls under fifteen years old who shall produce the best patterns made by them [...] for damask or printed linens». The improvement of designs for woven linen damask and for printed linens and cottons was central to the Dublin Society's concern to improve the quality of native manufacture. A peculiarly Irish product was poplin, a mixture of silk and wool, which had a long future in eighteenth and nineteenth century Dublin.

Besides offering prizes, the Society acted as an indirect agent of government policy by distributing subsidies to craftsmen applicants whose products, such as pottery, the Society approved of. The Society also formally gave approval to the work of individual tradesmen, who could then cite this approbation in their advertising. By giving grants to the Dublin Society for economic improvement, Parliament was relieved of the onus of dealing directly with individual petitioners. The concept of state subsidy for the promotion of manufacture in Ireland was in marked contrast to the British approach and was closer to the policy of continental princely states. The low level of economic activity in Ireland in the early eighteenth century necessitated state support if it was to develop. Moreover, British legislation was so constructed to favour the British economy.

In order to raise the level of pattern drawing for the textile industry the Society supported a School of Ornamental Drawing from 1756, partly financed by the Parliamentary grant.[3] The concept of a free drawing school to train pattern draftsmen originated in France. Such schools were founded in Rouen and in other French provincial towns. Interestingly, the École Royale Gratuite de Dessin, founded in Paris in 1767, postdated the Dublin Society's School of Ornamental Drawing in Dublin. The curriculum in the Dublin school closely resembled that of the French schools with a prominent place given to drawing flowers and foliages, as well as copying engravings of landscapes and decorative ornaments. This was essential training for the designer of textile fabrics, for painters of pottery, and for silver and plaster workers. Landscape art in the mid- eighteenth century (couched in the Rococo style, which lasted longer in Ireland than elsewhere) was seen as primarily a matter of decorative form in vegetation without the serious moral connotations of Neo-classical or Romantic landscape.

With the establishment of a School of Ornamental Drawing under James Mannin in 1756, a beginning was made in formal design education in Ireland. Drawing for engraving was also encouraged as it was an essential aspect in the Dublin publishing trade which flourished in the eighteenth century. The Society realised the importance of fashion for the sale of clothing fabrics, as can be seen from the premiums of 1788 for «three original patterns for linen, cotton and calico printers suited to the Summer season» and three more for the Winter season.

The boys who attended the School of Ornament for two half days a week were usually apprenticed to a trade. It was in the workshops, where they spent most of their time, that they learnt craft skills, such as weaving, block printing, raising silver, steel engraving, painting pottery and manipulating plaster. The teaching of the drawing of ornament in the school was aesthetic in aim to give the boys an idea of style and thus to improve the aesthetic quality of products of the trade. These were produced to satisfy the different economic levels on the market, including the most discerning of the nobility and gentry who would otherwise buy in London.

The Dublin Society also supported a School of Figure Drawing, which is not directly related to the focus of this article. There was also a third drawing school or department devoted to architectural drawing. The students learned to draw the classical orders, plans, elevations and also designs for interiors in terms of joinery and plasterwork. The skill in technical drawing was beneficial to the building of Georgian Dublin with its many squares and terraces of a domestic architecture. In that period it was normally the craftsman, not the architect, who would detail the chimney pieces joinery and plasterwork. It is generally agreed by modern scholars that the Society's drawing schools were central to the high level of workmanship of Georgian Ireland in the applied arts.

The Act of Union between the Kingdoms of England and Ireland took place in 1801 and terminated the existence of the Irish Parliament. Henceforth, the Imperial Parliament in London which ruled Ireland was less well disposed to use the Dublin Society as an agent of government policy. The Society's grant was steadily reduced, which made it impossible to develop design teaching further. The economic history of Ireland in the nineteenth century is one of industrial and agrarian decline and crisis. By contrast, Great Britain was the world leader of the industrial revolution. After the Act of Union Ireland was in the imperial free trade area and its textile, glass and other industries without any tariff protection. Only in the north-east of Ireland around Belfast was the linen and cotton weaving industry able to convert to industrial mass-production and compete in world markets. Ship building and heavy engineering were also developed, which were integral to the British economy. The other major Irish industries, which throve in the free trade environment, were the brewing, distilling and biscuit making industries, which had little for design. With the Great Famine of 1845-49 and the increasingly congested Irish farm system there was a realisation by many Irish businessmen that Ireland had to develop its industries and its technical education if it was to prosper economically.

2. See Berry, Henry F., *A History of the Royal Dublin Society*, Longman, Green, London, 1915.

3. For a detailed study of this subject see Turpin, John, «The School of Ornament of the Dublin Society in the 18th Century», *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, vol. 116, 1986, pp. 38-50.

Schools of drawing for manufactures were common in continental Europe by the early nineteenth century. It was only in the 1830s that government schools of design were first established in Britain. The Dublin Society hoped to benefit from this new initiative by getting more support for its own school. The Board of Trade, later the Department of Science and Art, London, which controlled the schools of design in the British Isles, insisted on conformity to its curriculum in the Dublin School. Whilst in Britain this may have had some relevance to the industrialised regions of the north of England, in Ireland it only had relevance to the new Belfast School of Design. Modest schools of design were also set up in Cork, Limerick, Derry and other smaller centres but they were mostly general drawing classes with little industrial relevance.[4]

In terms of design for industry there was no doubt that the Belfast School of Design was by far the most significant in Victorian Ireland. Students were taught to draw patterns for linen and damask weaving, and for printing on linen, all industries based on massive power-driven machinery. The linen industry also required decorative packaging for export, which had to be designed. There were many firms in Belfast like that of Marcus Ward which had outlets for young designers. They provided commercial printing of stationery, greeting cards and other ephemera.

Apart from the textile and engineering industries of Belfast and the food and drink industries of Dublin and Cork, Irish industries were on a very small scale, such as the cottage industries of woollen homespun weaving in the west of Ireland. Lacemaking in imitation of Belgium Venetian laces had been promoted since the eighteenth century by the Dublin Society, and by philanthropic ladies, as a means of giving employment to poor country girls. As an imported industry without indigenous roots, the designs were conservative and repetitive, although James Brenan as Headmaster at Cork and later at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art did a great deal to raise the level of quality. The firm of Richard Turner was a leading ironfounders making railings and ornamental ironwork in conservatories, such as those at the Botanic Gardens in Dublin, Belfast and Kew in London. The railway works at Inchicore and Dundalk produced some very fine examples of industrial design for engineering and for coach building. It was the railway with its branch lines in every corner of the country which symbolised the coming of the industrialised world with this new technology and concept of exact timekeeping.

The industrial movement in the south of Ireland began to gather momentum in the second half of the nineteenth century. There was a series of major national exhibitions of art and industries following in the wake of the Great Exhibition in London in 1851. Cork led the way in 1852, followed by the most important of all Irish industrial exhibitions at Dublin in 1853, financed by Dargan, the railway magnate. Others followed in 1865 and 1872. Irish industry showed up very poorly in comparison with the exhibits from Britain and the continental states. In an effort to make a display of international standard, the Irish products became marginalised.

The new nationalist political movement for Home Rule for Ireland, which was widely supported outside the north-east of Ireland, led to a new desire to promote Irish industries. The Dublin Artisans Exhibition of 1882, the Cork Exhibition of 1883 and another in Dublin in 1885[5] were populist local displays of manufacture. Heavy industry in connection with the railways and port industries grew in late Victorian Ireland and there was considerable industrial activity by the early twentieth century in Dublin led by native Irish capitalists, like William Martin Murphy, owner of Dublin United Tramways and the *Irish Independent Newspaper*. This Edwardian efflorescence of Irish industry reached its apogee in the Dublin International Exhibition of 1907, which ushered in new technology, such as electric light.

However, the main stimulus for design came not from heavy industry, but from the British arts and crafts movement inaugurated by William Morris. By the 1890s the Irish arts and crafts movement was under way. This displayed the craft techniques promoted by Morris's followers, such as waving, stained glass, enamelling, metalwork and fine printing. The driving force behind the movement was not primarily aesthetic, but cultural nationalism. This was the artistic aspect of the general political consensus for Home Rule for Ireland within the United Kingdom. The Irish literary revival had been growing since the mid-nineteenth century and was fully under way in the 1890s. Lay Aberdeen, the wife of the viceroy appointed by the liberal government which supported Home Rule for Ireland, was a leading supporter of Irish craft industries, such as lacemaking, woollen homespun and silk poplin weaving. She helped to market and promote these goods at home and abroad. Irish crafts were prominent in various international exhibitions in the 1890s and 1900s.

The years leading up to the outbreak of the first World War marked one of the most brilliant periods in Irish cultural history in terms of literature and art. It was also a period of rising political tension as nationalists grew nearer to their goal of self-government. The intellectual ferment of those years gave an energy to all aspects of Irish political and cultural endeavour, which were often intertwined.[6] The pressure for the development of Irish industry, agriculture and technical education in the late 1890s led to the establishment of a separate Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland in 1900 which spear-headed technical schools, including art and design teaching. Under new legislation Irish local authorities were anxious to support technical schools which included the crafts. Under this dynamic government department, still answerable to London, the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art became a centre for metalwork, enamelling, and stained glass (following the arts and crafts educational reforms in Britain). Stained glass was required in great quantity by the new Catholic Churches, another aspect of resurgent Irish culture of the period. The teachers in Dublin were Englishmen trained in the British arts and crafts tradition, such as Oswald Reeves and A. E. Child.[7] Outside the school the Cuala Industries and the Dun

4. See «The School of Design in Victorian Dublin», *Journal of Design History*, vol. 2, n.º 4, 1989, pp. 243-256.

5. See Turpin, John, «Exhibitions of Art and Industries in Victorian Ireland», *The Dublin Historical Record*, vol XXXV, n.º 2, March 1982, pp. 42-51.

6. Sheehy, Jeanne, *The Rediscovery of Ireland's Past. The Celtic Revival 1830-1930*, Thames & Hudson, London, 1980, with bibliography.

7. Gordon Bowe, Nicola, has written extensively on the Irish arts and

Emer Guild led the way with tapestry and rug weaving. There was also the Tower of Glass, a studio for stained glass. Fine printing of books and broadsheets was established, which was a renewal of an eighteenth century Irish craftwork tradition which had been killed by the importation of mass produced books.

In many respects the Irish arts and craft movement was the final outcome of the Irish Gothic revival of the nineteenth century, itself the physical embodiment of the restored status of the Catholic Church in Ireland after centuries of protest and marginalisation. The wealthy rising Catholic middle-class were anxious to support fine churches, but it was William Martin, a Catholic landlord of aesthetic sensibilities and continental experience, who realised how central good quality modern craftsmanship was to church building and who involved Irish craftsmen in ecclesiastical work.

Students from Dublin won many top prizes for the crafts in the national competitions in London in the years before the first World War. The irony of the Irish arts and crafts revival was that very many of the leading protagonists were of Anglo-Irish stock with strong aesthetic leanings. This upper social class had little influence in the government and State institutions on the newly independent Ireland from the 1920s onwards. The new regime reflected the middle class and peasantry, which came to power in the new State and which had little experience of the visual arts.

The coming of political independence in 1922 did not lead, as many of the nationalists had imagined, to an economically prosperous and intellectually confident Ireland. The reality of the 1920s was one of intellectual provincialism and economic stagnation as Irish industries endeavoured to exist in a depressed free trade environment. General enthusiasm for the Irish cultural revival declined as the new State adopted as official the nationalist ideology of a Gaelic Ireland. The crafts revival went into serious decline as did the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art. The only outstanding design success was the creation of the new Irish coinage in 1928 by Percy Metcalf, an English designer whose submission was far superior to that of Irish entrants.

A new beginning came in the 1930s with the change to economic self-development protected by a tariff wall against foreign imports which was the policy of the new Fianna Fail Government. It led to the development of many new Irish manufacturing industries. These were import substitution industries and they simply copied the designs of their competitors in England. Sean Lemass, the dynamic Minister for Industry and Commerce in the 1930s and 1940s, realised the need to improve Irish design, but these efforts were interrupted by the Second World War, which had the effect of stimulating home industries to supply the needs of neutral Ireland. Irish clothing, footwear, pottery and sundry manufacturing firms were established, but their standard of design was poor and in the post-war world it was clear they would not be able to compete in a free trade environment. The 1950s saw massive industrial recovery in post-war Europe. In the Republic of Ireland, however,[8] the story was one of economic stagnation, high unemployment and emigration to Britain.

Thomas Bodkin's report of the arts in Ireland in 1949 was the first to stress the major deficiencies of design education in the art schools and the lamentable aesthetic quality of Irish manufactures and publicity material. The Irish Arts Council, set up in 1951 as a result of his report, articulated these ideas further through two design exhibitions in 1954 and 1956 organised through the independent Irish Design Research Unit consultancy. The first of these exhibitions was an indication of good international design with exhibits by Margaret Leichner, Milner Gray, Heals, Sanderson, Arteluce of Italy, Royal Copenhagen porcelain, Wedgewood and Olivetti, among others. In view of the low level of design awareness, the State was to take a major role in reforming design education in Ireland as had happened with the Irish Parliament's subsidies to the Dublin Society in the eighteenth century when faced with a similar underdeveloped situation. Gradually during the 1950s a lobby of industrialists, educationalists and commentators began to articulate the importance of design for manufacture. An important new factor was the influx of immigrant Dutch graphic designers who revolutionised Irish advertising publicity material. They introduced the modern Bauhaus style into popular commercial imagery and typography which could be seen by a wide audience in the media and on billboards.

Córas Tráchtála (The Irish Export Board) established in 1952, through its design sector from 1961, was the dynamic engine for reform in design education. The commercial aim was to make Irish industry more competitive abroad. It was clear that the policy of tariff protectionism was coming to an end and that Ireland would have to face the competitive world of Britain and then of Europe sooner rather than later. When Ireland joined the European Economic Community this became a reality.

It was to give public prominence to these reforming ideas that W. H. Walsh, Head of the Export Board, commissioned a panel of Scandanavian designers to make a visit and audit on the state of design in Ireland. In the 1950s Scandanavian design was seen as the leading exemplaire of modern design, particularly for a small still largely rural country like Ireland. The report of the consultants, *Design in Ireland*, published in 1962, was a devastating critique of Irish design in education and in industry. A major public controversy erupted in Parliament and in the press which set in motion a chain of events which shaped the contemporary design environment of Ireland.

The main result of the report was that the Export Board with government support opened Kilkenny Design Workshops in 1965, inspired by the Plus Craft Workshops in Frederikstad in Norway.[9] The first priority was to improve

crafts movement. In particular see *Harry Clarke, his Graphic Art*, The Dolmen Press, 1983, and *The Life and Work of Harry Clarke 1889-1931*, The Irish Academic Press, Dublin, 1989. «The Arts and Crafts Society of Ireland 1894-1925», with particular reference to Harry Clarke, in «Aspects of British Design», *Journal of the Decorative Arts Society*, Brighton, n° 9, 1983; «Women in the Arts and Crafts Movement in Ireland 1886-1930», catalogue entries and biographies on *Women Artists of Ireland 1700-1943*, catalogue of an exhibition at de National Gallery of Ireland, 1987; «Two Early Twentieth-Century Irish Arts and Crafts Workshops in Context: An Tur Gloine and the Dun Emer Guild and Industries», *Journal of Design History*, vol. 2 n.os 2 and 3.

8. See Turpin, John, «The Irish Design Movement of the 1960s», *Design Issues*, vol. III, n.° 1, Spring 1986, the School of Art and Design, the University of Illinois at Chicago.

9. For a general account and illustrations, see Marchant, Nicholas, and Addis, Jeremy, *Kilkenny Design, Twenty One Years of Design in Ireland*, Kilkenny Design Workshops and Lund Humphries, Kilkenny & London, 1984.

the level of studio craftsmanship, such as handweaving and silversmithing, which was very successful. Many foreign designers were attracted to Kilkenny to lead the workshops. Several of them settled in the vecinity and this led to a general raising of craft activity in Ireland. Kilkenny Design Workshops subsequently turned its attention to furniture, graphics, fashion, packaging, but never became a centre for product design engineering. The Irish craftsman became far more common in the years which followed. Already during the 1950s at the National College of Art, the crafts had regained the place they had had in the early twentieth century. In the county as a whole, handweaving, studio pottery, glass blowing, light metalworking and many other crafts had a renaissance during the 1970s and 1980s. This was itself influenced by the international artist-designer movement. Crafts continued to be fostered by the Royal Dublin Society, as in the eighteenth century, and also by the Crafts Council, a new body founded in 1971, which took over the control of running the workshops when Kilkenny Design Workshops was wound up in 1988. The Industrial Development Authority, another State body, began to assist crafts people to become established through its scheme of grants to small businesses.

While the Irish fashion and graphic design industries had modernised during the 1960s, largely independently of design education institutions, industrial design engineering remained a major concern of design reformers. A government appointed Council of Design, reporting in 1967, called for major structural changes at the National College of Art to incorporate modern professional design education in a completely new college building. The National College of Art had remained an integral part of the Department of Education since 1924. It was administered by civil servants; it had little academic autonomy and few full-time staff.

At a symposium organised by the Arts Council in 1968, Sir Robin Darwin, Director of the Royal College of Art London, called for radical modernisation of the Dublin College of Art and for a new university faculty of industrial design engineering, science and mathematics. Córas Tráchtála kept up the pressure for reform and organised an industrial design seminar in Killarney in 1970, urging the establishment of postgraduate studies in industrial design. Misha Black, the major industrial design theorist at the Royal College of Art, stressed the need for highly specialised and skilled designers and dismissed the current radical student call for generalists.

The 1960s was a decade of modernisation in Irish society. Irish television widened the viewers' intellectual and visual horizons. Institutions of the State were subjected to criticism. Economic boom and greater spending power and industrial expansion provided an economic context wherein design services were required for marketing, fashion, publicity and in product development. The business and commercial lobby became converted gradually to the idea of design for industry. Public opinion was mobilised through the media to lend its support for educational reform. Major student disturbances at the National College of Art led to a long running public controversy from 1968 to 1971, when the college was finally given academic autonomy. The result was that by the late 1970s the college's Faculty of Design had specialisation in graphic design, fashion and textiles, craft design and industrial design engineering. This latter course was run in conjunction with the National Institute for Higher Education Limerick, which was to become the University of Limerick in 1989. Throughout the 1980s all courses in the National College of Art and Design attained degree status under the authority of the National Council for Educational Awards, a country-wide degree giving authority set up by the State in 1980. Independently, but simultaneously, design education developed in the many new Regional Technical Colleges throughout Ireland, which were built with support from the European Community. In these and in the two older schools of art at Dublin and Limerick, many design disciplines had a place. In Belfast the school of art became first a part of the Ulster Polytechnic, then of the University of Ulster. Its traditional industrial base in textiles, silversmithing and graphic design was maintained.

In summary, the debates and controversies in the 1960s have led to the firm recognition of design education in art education establishments throughout Ireland, which has been reflected in degrees and diplomas awarded by the National Council for Educational Awards. Industry has also come to realise the importance of design in product development and in marketing. Qualified graduates found ready employment, notably in fashion, graphic design and industrial design outlets. Traditional crafts people have found a far greater sale for their work, which has been promoted actively by the Crafts Council of Ireland. The present health of the design profession is reflected in the active membership of the Society of Designers in Ireland, founded in 1972, which gives professional recognition to Irish designers.