

## **‘Much leeway needs to be made up in our equipment’: Muintir na Tire and US scholarships for Irish sociology students, 1958–59**

PETER MURRAY

*National University of Ireland, Maynooth*

---

### **Abstract**

Documentary investigation has particular strengths to offer the study of the historical emergence of sociological research. Here two documents relating to a Muintir na Tire initiative of the late 1950s to secure US scholarship funding for Irish students of sociology are introduced and reproduced. The reasons why the scheme did not get off the ground, even though financial support appeared to be on offer, are discussed. Here a combination of Muintir na Tire’s limited support within the Catholic Church and a modest, but significant, expansion of Irish social science educational capacity brought about by the use of Archbishop McQuaid’s power within University College Dublin are emphasised.

**Key words:** sociology, scholarships, US universities, Muintir na Tire, Catholic Church, documentary research

### **Introduction**

Documents and archives tend to enjoy an acknowledged, if minor, place in expositions of social research methodology. Leading textbooks often devote a chapter to their consideration, alongside much lengthier treatments of the dominant quantitative and qualitative traditions of the social sciences (see, for instance, Gidley 2004, Bryman 2008: Chapter 21). But, relatively minor though its generally recognised role may be, sociological research that draws primarily upon documentary and archival resources has a distinguished history as well as some impressive present-day advocates and practitioners (Scott 1990, 2006; Hill 1993; McCulloch 2004; Prior 2003, 2008 and 2011).

The view that ‘sociology is a science and ... documents should be handled scientifically’ underpins Scott’s (1990: 1) argument that ‘the general principles involved in handling documents are no different from those involved in any other area of social research, but ... specific features of documentary research do require the consideration of their distinguishing features and the particular

techniques needed to handle them'. Here emphasis is placed on the need for careful appraisal of documents using the criteria of authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning. Drawing on documentary resources is compatible with both the positivist research paradigm that underlies quantitative analysis and non-positivist alternatives framing the choice of qualitative investigation. The household forms from the 1901 and 1911 censuses in Ireland held in the National Archives (and now available online) have been used like questionnaires from which numerically coded variables for statistical analysis can be constructed. Hepburn and Collins (1981) have analysed Belfast's social structure in this way. Within the qualitative tradition examples of clinician/patient interaction and of scientific research network analysis have been drawn on to exemplify how 'documents should not merely be regarded as containers for words, images, information, instructions and so forth ... they can influence episodes of social interaction, and schemes of social organization and ... enter into the analysis of such interactions and organization' (Prior 2003: 822).

Situated somewhere between these ends of the spectrum is a type of sociological study to which a document-based approach is particularly suited – the historical development of sociology itself as a research-based discipline. Internationally classic studies whose contexts have been illuminated by document-based revisitations include the research carried out by Elton Mayo and others at General Electric's Hawthorne plant in the 1920s and 1930s (Smith 1987), the depiction by Institute of Community Studies researchers of family and kinship in East London after the Second World War (Tiratsoo and Clapson 2001) and the Affluent Worker team's exploration of working-class attitudes and behaviour in Luton during the early 1960s (Savage 2005). In Ireland the Introduction to the third edition of Arensberg and Kimball's *Family and Community in Ireland* (Byrne, Edmondson and Varley 2001) provides a striking example of the value of documentary research while two other pioneering pieces of research – Muintir na Tire's Limerick Rural Survey (Murray and Feeney 2011) and the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations' study of Dublin busmen (Murray 2005) – have also been re-examined using archival sources.

Here another aspect of Muintir na Tire's involvement in the development of Irish sociology is considered through a document study. This is a late 1950s scheme to provide Irish postgraduate students of sociology with scholarships to study at US universities whose proposal coincided with that of the Limerick Rural Survey. Here the reproduction of two key documents is preceded by a discussion of why sociology had assumed such importance for Muintir na Tire at this time. Reasons why Muintir na Tire ultimately did not take up an apparently firm offer from Archbishop Cushing of Boston to supply scholarships are also put forward. Finally, further sources for the document-based study of Irish Sociology are briefly considered.<sup>1</sup>

*Muintir na Tire and its turn to sociology*

Founded in 1937 by a Tipperary priest, Canon John Hayes, Muintir na Tire (Muintir) proclaimed itself to be ‘a Movement for the promotion of the true welfare, spiritual, cultural and material of Ireland and, in particular, of its rural people, through the application of Christian social principles’. Whyte (1980: 69–70) views it as ‘one of the most important channels through which the new precision in Catholic social teaching became known in Ireland’ while L’Estrange (2007a: 568–9) characterises it as ‘a “bottom-up” experiment in organising competing social interests into local communities constituted on micro-corporatist lines’. Muintir was thus connected with projects for the reconfiguration of Irish institutions in line with the principle of subsidiarity and the pattern of vocational organisation advocated in papal encyclicals such as *Quadragesimo Anno*. Canon Hayes was a member of the Commission on Vocational Organisation whose report was published in 1943.

What Muintir brought to Irish vocationalism was a distinctive local focus on the unit of the rural church parish combined with the practical initiatives that its several hundred parish-based Guilds pursued. Thus during the Emergency (1939–45) period the Muintir guilds quickly came to the fore in the local organisation of the government-sponsored drives to try to make up shortfalls in food and fuel supplies (O’Leary 2004: 237–40). A broadly popular and prestigious movement, up until the late 1960s Muintir’s annual Rural Week normally attracted the attendance of the Taoiseach of the day. As a religiously inspired Irish movement it received financial and other support from US admirers such as Archbishop Cushing (Rynne 1960) and, with the emergence of local community development as a field of academic study, it was by the early 1960s attracting requests for student placements from British universities.<sup>2</sup>

Muintir’s turn towards sociology occurred shortly after the January 1957 death of its founder. In January 1958, when an allocation for Technical Assistance from the Marshall Aid Grant Counterpart Fund<sup>3</sup> had become available to it, the Department of Agriculture invited rural organisations to submit applications for project funding. Muintir responded by proposing the study that became known as the Limerick Rural Survey (LRS). It also affiliated to the European Society for Rural Sociology. That society’s President, Professor E.W. Hofstee of Wageningen University in Holland, was then invited to address the 1958 Rural Week in Roscrea, County Tipperary. Recruited as LRS researcher, Patrick McNabb spent a training period in Wageningen in late 1958 while the Dutch sociologist with whom he had worked most closely, Jelle Lijfering, subsequently visited Limerick twice to support the fieldwork initiated there at the start of 1959.

On Muintir’s National Executive P.J. Meghen, Limerick’s County Manager, and the Reverend Dr Thomas Morris, Vice President of St Patrick’s College, Thurles, County Tipperary, originated the idea of the LRS (Newman 1964:

vii). For guidance on issues of social science theory and method, these originators turned to the Reverend Dr Jeremiah Newman, who had been Professor of Sociology at St Patrick's College, Maynooth, County Kildare, since 1953. Referring to an invitation to discuss the LRS proposal with Department of Agriculture officials, Morris wrote to Newman on 1 May 1958 'now you simply must be on the deputation, to discuss things which we know nothing of!'<sup>4</sup>

Irish universities had acquired their first designated sociology positions in 1937. In the national seminary at Maynooth a Chair of Catholic Sociology and Catholic Action was filled by Fr. Peter McKeivitt, while in University College Cork (UCC) the Governing Body established a lectureship in sociology. The Maynooth Chair was endowed by the Knights of Saint Columbanus, but UCC found itself without the funds to pay a lecturer. Alfred O'Rahilly – Registrar, Professor of Mathematical Physics and much else besides (Gaughan 1986, 1989, 1992, 1993) – was to take on the additional role of unpaid sociology lecturer for nearly a decade until Fr. Jerome O'Leary was appointed. O'Rahilly's involvement began a shift away from sociology being purely a subject taught to seminarians by priests who were seminary professors, although this did not involve making it any less Catholic in content. O'Rahilly argued that all education of adult Catholics, whether inside or outside the university, should include the study of the church's social teaching. After 1945 he launched an extensive adult education programme based on a partnership between UCC and Munster Vocational Education Committees that prompted other extra-mural initiatives at the National University colleges in Dublin and Galway.

The rise of the atheistic Soviet Union to superpower status, fears regarding the spread of communism across Europe and divisions which had opened up within the Irish labour movement made trade unionists the primary initial target of such programmes. But, with communism not posing a credible domestic threat, a stronger rural emphasis began to develop within the Irish adult education movement during the 1950s, moving it and its Catholic sociology further into Muintir's particular sphere of activity. By this stage Irish Catholic sociology was undergoing a change of emphasis following the 1953 succession of McKeivitt by Newman as Maynooth's Professor. There Newman inaugurated 'the second phase of Irish Catholic sociology [which] involved bringing theology into dialogue with mainstream sociology... he reflected continuity with his predecessor by emphasising the need to promote Catholic sociology but, more than McKeivitt, sought to utilise the standard sociological methods of social surveys in gathering data to confront the idealistic claims of Catholic theology' (Conway 2011: 51).

In July and August 1958 Newman travelled extensively in the United States on Muintir's behalf. His later references to this tour, both published and unpublished, were to place it in the context of the preparations being made to undertake the LRS now that funding had been agreed. But – while Newman obtained advice for and recruited some high-profile names as consultants to

the LRS during his US visit<sup>5</sup> – the primary purpose of his tour was distinct from, and much more ambitious in scope than, the project to be carried out in Limerick. Stated publicly as well as privately at the time, this was ‘to investigate the courses in sociology (Rural Sociology, Social Research) which would be suitable for postgraduate studies by Irish students and the possibility of obtaining scholarships for such Irish students’.<sup>6</sup>

Irish sociologists up to this point had usually been sent by their ecclesiastical superiors to study in Britain and/or on the continent. McKevitt had studied in Louvain and Rome, Newman in Louvain and Oxford, Fr. James Kavanagh of UCD had gone to Oxford and Cambridge while Fr. Conor Ward was in Liverpool. Agricultural specialists, by contrast, were a group with notably stronger links to the US university system – Tovey (1992: 97), commenting on an Irish tendency to equate rural sociology with a sociology of farming, notes that ‘some of the main researchers in the area came from an agricultural science background or were trained in US Land Grant Colleges’. Launched in 1949, the Marshall Aid Technical Assistance programme had provided an early link in the agricultural studies field, funding study visits to the USA for participants such as Robert O’Connor, then headmaster of a Roscommon vocational school and subsequently Deputy Director of the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI). In 1958 the Fulbright educational exchange programme between Ireland and the USA, which has since provided continuous support for Irish postgraduates to study at US universities across the spectrum of disciplines, was, like most of its fellow Grant Counterpart Fund projects, just coming on-stream (O’Grady 1988, Whelan 2000: 306–13). Whether they went to Europe or the USA, Irish students of sociology in the 1950s would usually encounter a situation in which Catholic sociology co-existed with rival approaches (Conway 2011). In Ireland, by contrast, the absence of the subject from Trinity College Dublin and Queen’s University Belfast gave the Catholic version an island-wide academic monopoly.

The initiative for Muintir’s investigation of US sociological education again came from Morris who wrote to Newman on 28 February 1958 enclosing the draft of a Memorandum ‘to be sent by Fr. Morrissey [successor to Canon Hayes as National Chairman of Muintir na Tire] to Archbishop Cushing as soon as possible’:

We will, of course, write a covering letter also, telling the Archbishop that you hope to travel to America. The purpose of this Memorandum is to enable the Archbishop to pass it on to somebody with university connections, or to some possible sponsors, saying ‘This is their idea, fix up something’. Hence some preamble and a straight appeal for help.<sup>7</sup>

The final version of the memorandum (Document A) and the covering letter with which it was enclosed (Document B) are reproduced below. The memorandum begins by characterising Muintir’s role as ‘basically educational’. In his letter to Newman of 28 February Morris elaborates on this point: ‘I believe that

Muintir must move over to make room for the farmers' organisations and that its function must be educational more than the "brightening up" or recreational idea. Sociology is bound to reach Ireland some time and it is well to have the Papists equipped for the time when it comes.<sup>8</sup>

For Morris and Newman 'equipping the Papists' now involved moving Catholic sociology beyond the status of a branch of ethics that rehashed papal encyclicals on the social question and towards empirical investigation based on scientific principles. The farmers' organisations Morris had in mind were Macra na Feirme (Macra) and its offshoot the National Farmers Association (NFA). Muintir, Macra and the Irish Countrywomen's Association (ICA) had been grouped together at the start of the 1950s by US Marshall Aid administrators as agencies of rural regeneration deserving of Grant Counterpart Fund support.<sup>9</sup> But divergences between Muintir's project of an all-embracing community movement and what it perceived as the sectional interest projects of its fellow funding beneficiaries were arguably as significant as the aims these movements shared in common (see Rynne 1960: 195–7).

Why Muintir should be seen as needing to reposition itself to accommodate the emergence and growth of Macra and the NFA was exemplified by the conflict over the Parish Plan for the organisation of agricultural advisory services which had dogged the last years of Canon Hayes' life. Originally devised by members of Muintir's National Executive, the Parish Plan was partially implemented in an adapted form by James Dillon during his stints as Minister for Agriculture in the first (1948–51) and second (1954–57) Inter-Party Governments (Daly 2002: 403–6). Muintir was ultimately to distance itself from Dillon's initiatives in order to avoid damaging defections (Manning 1999: 305) but not before it came under sustained attack from Macra and the NFA:

The 'Farmers Journal' newspaper criticised the Plan mainly on the grounds that Muintir na Tire had little qualification for managing the research and development of Irish farming 'because many of the officials are national teachers and curates'... the National Farmers Association (NFA) which was closely related with Macra na Feirme, added their objections to Muintir na Tire's involvement in running the Parish Plan. Canon Hayes referred to this concerted opposition as 'the hounding of the Plan'. (Tierney 2004: 101–2)

Moving over to embrace the educational combination of empirical sociology and adult education (the latter being subsequently widened into community development) provided a way out of the welter of recrimination in which the Parish Plan had embroiled Muintir. Sociology, however, required educated practitioners that Ireland did not possess and the appeal for scholarships at US universities for Irish students was intended to make good this deficit. A clerical/lay mix among the scholarship holders was envisaged although the reproduced documents have nothing positive to say on behalf of laymen (or laywomen) while priests are considered more likely to return to work in Ireland after their studies are completed and, when they do so, to contribute to Muintir's work.

Another letter from Fr. Morrissey – to the US Ambassador on 12 March – suggests that ‘perhaps a proportion of half lay and half clerical may be best’.<sup>10</sup>

### **Jeremiah Newman in the USA**

Archbishop Cushing’s initial response was neither optimistic nor enthusiastic. He predicted that ‘you are going to have a very hard time in getting scholarships in this country for Irish students interested in postgraduate work in the field of social service’. He added that ‘I will welcome anyone you send here and help him in any way I can but I think that it would be a wonderful thing if the Irish Societies in this country would sponsor some students’.<sup>11</sup> With the Archbishop making plain in subsequent correspondence that ‘there is nothing I can do about arranging interviews with Universities and Colleges’,<sup>12</sup> Muintir eventually turned to the Washington-based National Catholic Welfare Conference for assistance in making academic contacts and organising a coast-to-coast itinerary.<sup>13</sup> Arriving in New York in July, Newman made his way first to Boston. There, face-to-face with Muintir’s representative, the Archbishop maintained his record of generous support for both religious and secular Irish causes (see Murray 2009b) with an offer to take personal responsibility for the provision of five scholarships for Irish priests ‘thus providing us with as many as we would be in a position to use in the foreseeable future’:

The Cardinal’s offer included financing the transportation of the students to America, and the locating of them in presbyteries in the American centres in which they would be studying (their pastoral work to be confined to weekend work). He thought that there would be no difficulty in getting pastors to keep them, even in dioceses not his own. As regards the Scholarships proper, for two years each, he said that he should have no difficulty in getting these directly himself from any of the many Jesuit universities and the Catholic University of America, when the time arose.<sup>14</sup>

While in the USA Newman visited eighteen universities, identifying five to which ‘for our purposes the choice can be narrowed down’: Fordham in New York, the Catholic University of America in Washington DC, the University of St Louis, Notre Dame (Indiana) and Loyola (Chicago) – ‘Notre Dame may be out as regards Dr. Cushing getting a scholarship there; of that I am not sure. But the others, apart from CU, are Jesuit and he says he can also get one at CU, of which he is a trustee’.<sup>15</sup>

Newman and the US academics with whom he discussed the matter were in agreement that ‘it is desirable that our students get a degree (M.A.) so as to have status in the subject on return home and for psychological reasons to give them a feeling of being able to do something on their return’. Although the Irish priest-students would have very little or no grounding in ‘modern’ sociology at undergraduate level, Newman recorded that ‘the Professors I met in the universities to which I have given special mention were agreed that our students could, with special arrangements, be enabled to get an MA in two years or at most two

years plus a preliminary Summer period'.<sup>16</sup> With scholarships available and university credentials apparently obtainable, only one problem was encountered. Rural sociology – the specialised branch of the discipline Muintir was most keen to develop in Ireland – might, as the memorandum to Archbishop Cushing stated, be more developed in the USA than in Europe but Newman recorded that it was not taught in any of the US Catholic universities, 'largely because most Catholics in the U.S. live in urban areas'.<sup>17</sup>

Warming to the scholarship scheme, Archbishop Cushing had 'expected that we would have five men ready to go out in the Autumn of 1958' and 'thought that one of them should be made a kind of "superior" to keep in touch with the others'.<sup>18</sup> Newman did not consider arrangements to send a group of this size at the one time to be feasible and in the long memorandum he wrote in April 1959, he concluded that 'the main thing is to get one man at least now ... if too long a time is allowed to lapse, people over there are liable to forget about my visit'.<sup>19</sup> One man's studies is all that can be documented to date as being linked to Newman's visit, though not to the wider Muintir-originated scheme of scholarships for sociology students that led to its being undertaken. In a very detailed account of the Limerick Rural Survey that was compiled some time after he became Bishop of Limerick in 1974, Newman wrote of his US visit that:

As Cardinal Cushing was a good friend of Ireland and Canon Hayes, it was also decided that my first stop should be in Boston. There the Cardinal – although deeply engaged at the time in the launching of the Missionary Society of St. James – supplied me with whatever funds were needed for my visits within the States ... The way things ultimately turned out, my journey did have many results. I visited around twenty Departments of Sociology, and lectured in a number of them, such as the Catholic University of America in Washington and the University of St. Louis, making many contacts which were to be of much value for Sociology in Ireland. It was because of one of them that Professor Liam Ryan, later my successor as Professor of Sociology at Maynooth, went to St. Louis to do his degree in Sociology there.<sup>20</sup>

*Why, with support on offer, did the scheme not proceed?*

As the Memorandum sent to Archbishop Cushing (he became a Cardinal at the end of 1958) indicates, the cooperation of bishops 'willing to nominate priests belonging to their diocese as students of Sociology after their ordination' was essential to the operation of the proposed scholarship scheme. However, none of those promoting the scheme were bishops. Moreover, Muintir was a regionally confined movement – present in perhaps one-third of parishes, strong in central Munster but almost non-existent in the religiously-divided north and in the poor small farm west of the country (Murray and Feeney 2010: 20) where bishops were unlikely to be responsive. Added to limitations on Muintir's spread deriving from the social structure were others stemming from specifically ecclesiastical factors. As Canon Hayes' biographer notes, 'from the beginning there was opposition to Muintir na Tire and cool views of its founder' within the clergy of his church:



A few bishops adopted a negative attitude. The introduction of guilds into the Kerry diocese, for example, was for a time tolerated rather than blessed; that situation has of course changed. Since 1940 the archdiocese of Dublin has been closed to Muintir na Tire. Killaloe, now a stronghold of the movement, was forbidden territory while Bishop Fogarty reigned. (Rynne 1960: 170–1)

In ecclesiastical terms this meant that Muintir was a movement of the Cashel and Emly province with a much weaker (if any) presence in the Armagh, Dublin and Tuam provinces. The closure of Dublin was particularly significant since its instigator, Archbishop McQuaid, was, by virtue of both his position and his personality, a dominant presence within the church hierarchy for more than three decades (Whyte 1980: 75–80). He was also the member of that hierarchy ‘whose deep interest in social questions led him to pioneer the contemporary approach by sending priests of his own diocese for post-graduate training in the social sciences, and by incessantly urging the pastoral importance of such training’ (Ward 1964: 26). Suggested reasons for the Archbishop’s negative attitude to Muintir include a perception of it as a rival to the Catholic Social Service Conference he had set up in Dublin as well as distaste for the mixing of the sexes in its membership and for its Christian rather than specifically Catholic character (Cooney 1999: 157–8). The third of these reasons receives confirmation from a 1959 exchange between the Archbishop and Fr. James Kavanagh, who was then teaching in UCD after periods of study in Oxford and Cambridge. On this occasion, Fr. Kavanagh wrote seeking advice regarding:

The possibility of having some Catholic body to represent Irish farmers & rural people in a proposed Catholic International Rural Body (about which the present Holy Father is said to be keenly interested). This is something like the problem which arose some years ago re the affiliation of our Trade Unions to the Christian International Federation. Conditions here are different from the continent. If, however, as Your Grace seemed to suggest, some rural members of the Dublin Adult Education courses & who are also members of Muintir na Tire, Young Farmers & N.F.A. were to form a committee to make a liaison body, that might meet the situation. I think this might be feasible. Is that what Your Grace had in mind?

To this query the Archbishop responded that ‘the Farmer Body does not simply exist in our circumstances. I thought of the [Dublin] Institute [of Catholic Sociology], as being the only *Catholic* body. Muintir na Tire is interdenominational. Your plan is good: try it out.’<sup>21</sup>

Between Newman’s summer 1958 visit to the USA and his spring 1959 composition of the memorandum on its results, the death of Jeremiah Kinane left vacant the position of Archbishop of Cashel and Emly. By the end of that year Morris had been chosen as his successor. In that position he quickly joined Archbishop McQuaid as an active promoter of socio-religious research in Ireland (Ward 1964: 26). The Cashel and Emly province had an arrangement in place whereby newly ordained priests for whom no immediate vacancies existed were temporarily assigned to work in Dublin. Within months of becoming

Archbishop, Morris was arranging for one newly ordained priest heading for Dublin, Fr. James Holway, to study for an MA in sociology at UCD, writing to Archbishop McQuaid on 17 July 1960 that 'I had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Conor Ward last week and was very impressed by him as a scholar and as a priest. If Father Holway can serve an apprenticeship to social research, in addition to his university studies, our diocese in turn will benefit greatly'. On 29 September, with the arrangements now in place, Morris wrote again to McQuaid that 'I am deeply grateful to you and Fr. [Conor] Martin for the trouble you have taken to arrange a course at the University for Father Holway. I am satisfied that he will have the best possible direction in his studies in sociology and the purpose which I have in mind is to have him well trained in this subject'.<sup>22</sup>

With Archbishop McQuaid's longstanding negative attitude to Muintir creating a stumbling block to securing the necessary episcopal backing for a US scholarship scheme operating under its auspices, the precedent-setting case of Fr. Holway<sup>23</sup> shows Morris, having himself become an Archbishop, looking closer to home at an Irish university in his promotion of the study of sociology by Irish priests. This was possible because of the strengthening of social science at UCD which McQuaid's accumulation of extensive power within that institution (Garvin 1998; Cooney 1999: 295–6) had been used to support. The teaching appointments of Fr. James Kavanagh (1957) and Fr. Conor Ward (1959) were followed by the 1962 upgrading of the Bachelor of Social Science from a Pass degree taught at night to a daytime Honours degree. The creation of a separate Social Science department and of a Social Science Research Centre continued this upgrading trend. Of the 1960s Conway (2006: 19) has written that 'because it [UCD] did not have a postgraduate program, aspiring sociologists tended to study in America or the United Kingdom'. UCD's postgraduate facilities in this period were undoubtedly limited, and the outflow of students – both clerical and lay – was unquestionably important. But what that university could provide does seem to have been sufficient to satisfy most of the requirements of the main mover behind the Muintir scholarship scheme in relation to equipping the Papists for the time when sociology would arrive in Ireland.

Recent work on Irish Catholic sociology has had a strong focus on the national seminary in Maynooth with its Chair endowed by the Knights of Saint Columbanus in the 1930s and its role as the spawning ground of the Christus Rex Society in the 1940s (Conway 2011; L'Estrange 2007b). But there were also significant developments in the National University of Ireland constituent colleges. The UCC career of Fr. Jerome O'Leary links an earlier period of innovation under Alfred O'Rahilly with the modern one begun when Fr. Liam Ryan returned to Ireland in 1964 after studying in St Louis. Within the context of Archbishop McQuaid's wider diocesan project, the empirical social science emphasis advocated by Newman was promoted at UCD at the end of the 1950s by the appointments of Fr. James Kavanagh, Fr. Conor Ward and – slightly later in the cognate politics field – John Whyte. The Muintir US scholarship scheme

was connected with Maynooth through Newman's central role in its promotion. An examination of the scheme's history also highlights the important role other NUI colleges<sup>24</sup> played in Irish sociology's emergence.

### **Concluding observations**

Catholic Church archives are of central relevance in the study of the early (1930s–1960s) history of Irish sociology because virtually all those working in the discipline in this period were priests located within institutions directly or indirectly controlled by their ecclesiastical superiors. The documents reproduced here are from the Jeremiah Newman papers in the Limerick diocesan archives. This introduction to them draws upon other material in that collection as well as on material from the John Charles McQuaid papers in the Dublin diocesan archives. The papers of Thomas Morris have yet to be catalogued and are not currently available to researchers. There are other Irish bishops whose papers – if available – undoubtedly contain material relevant to the broader Catholic social movement of the middle decades of the twentieth century, some of which may be specifically relevant to sociology as a discipline within the National University colleges. Here Cardinals MacRory and D'Alton of Armagh, Bishop Browne of Galway and Bishop Lucey of Cork are four promising candidates for further investigation. Aside from diocesan records, important material may also be contained in the archives of religious orders such as the Jesuits.

After 1960 state files increasingly displace the papers of churchmen as the main source of documentary evidence relating to the ongoing development of the social sciences. With the exhaustion of the Grant Counterpart Fund, Muintir was to look primarily to Irish state aid to support projects involving further sociological research. Evidence of the very limited success with which it did so is to be found in the records of a number of government departments (Murray and Feeney 2010). It was within these departments that the project of obtaining Ford Foundation funding for an Economic Research Institute was conceived in 1959. By the time this Institute was restructured to extend its remit to include social research in the mid-1960s the scope of government programmes for economic expansion was widening to encompass a social development component and the state's growth strategy was coming to centre on attracting foreign direct industrial investment to a European Economic Community member. Within this new context empirical sociology had become an item of infrastructural equipment that policymakers in the key programme-devising government departments wished to acquire the power of shaping for their own purposes. For this reason the files of these departments also illuminate the initial embedding of the division whose depth has been repeatedly highlighted as a distinctive feature of the discipline in contemporary Ireland (Goldthorpe, O'Dowd and O'Connor 2002; Jackson 2004; Murray 2009a) – that between 'the sociology of the research centres' and the 'sociology of the university departments'.

**Document A***Memorandum from Muintir na Tire (People of the Land)**National Headquarters, Tipperary, Ireland**Scholarships at U.S. Universities for Irish Students of Sociology**An Appeal*

Muintir na Tire is not a teaching body but, as an association aiming at the welfare of the rural people principally through promoting the community idea in the parish, its function must be basically educational. Our deepest aim is to preserve and pass on the faith and fine traditions which have benefited not only the Ireland of today but many other countries as well. The late Canon Hayes, founder of Muintir na Tire, held strongly the idea that the urgent task of today is to direct patriotic endeavour in Ireland into peaceful and constructive channels; the recent revival of militaristic nationalism has again directed attention to the need for this new outlook (cf. Most Rev. Dr. Lucey, Lecture to Rural Week, Ennis, August, 1957; Most Rev. Dr. Philbin, Pamphlet 'Patriotism', Dublin, Gill, 1958; Anita C. Lane, Article 'And How is Dear old Ireland', *America* January 18, 1958). Further, while there is no explicit sympathy with socialism, much less with Communism, among the people, observers such as Colin Clark have commented on the degree to which we are inclined to look to the State for services and initiative generally. There is scope for the work of Muintir na Tire then, in developing constructive patriotism and promoting the study and application of Christian social principles.

Social research and adult education must occupy an important place in our programme. The success of the University Extension courses and of other programmes, including the beginnings already made by Muintir na Tire (cf. *Rural Ireland*, 1958), show that there is widespread demand for adult education. It is not an uncommon experience for priests who are in contact with various societies to find that the demand of laity for instruction on the social teaching of the Church is very impressive.

The study of specialised branches of Sociology has not made the same progress in Europe as it has in the United States; for example there is only one full chair of Rural Sociology in Europe. Recently a European Society for Rural Sociology was formed at a meeting held in Wageningen Agricultural University, Holland (Cf. *Christus Rex Quarterly*, January 1958), and Muintir na Tire hopes to affiliate to this Society. Ireland should have a distinctive contribution to make to this work but much leeway needs to be made up in our equipment. Rev. Jeremiah Newman, M.A., D.Ph., Professor of Catholic Sociology and Catholic Action, Maynooth, has written that: 'one of the first tasks to be tackled by Irish Sociology in the future is the building up of a fund of factual information about the various domains of social life ... Our approach to Sociology is far too general; we lack specialists and specialised fields of study ... there is a crying need in Ireland for such special Sociology, at the very least for Rural Sociology and Urban Sociology. There is need too for the Sociology of religion', *Rural Ireland*, 1957, pp. 75-76, published by Muintir na Tire.)

Muintir na Tire therefore appeals for assistance to enable a number of Irish students to be trained in Sociology in universities in the United States.

We hope to benefit both directly and indirectly from the presence in Ireland of a number of students trained in Sociology. We are painfully aware that social research in Ireland must remain in a backward state until native sociologists are available.

It is not possible to make definite arrangements for recruiting students in Ireland until some scheme has been arrived at; we propose therefore to send a representative to the United States during the Summer of 1958 (four to six weeks during July–August) to investigate possibilities on the spot.

We hope that it will be possible to arrive at an arrangement whereby a number of students, say ten at least, might be trained over a period of years. Supposing two students to be sent each year, each to follow a three years' course, seven years would be required for ten students and the equivalent of scholarships for thirty students for one year. (Note: the 'three years' course' is a figure taken merely for the purpose of illustration: we await information as to the actual durations of various courses.) The students would be graduates of the National University of Ireland and we hope that several Irish bishops would be willing to nominate priests belonging to their dioceses as students of Sociology after their ordination. (As Muintir na Tire is a parish movement, priests inevitably have played and will continue to play a big part in its development.) Lay students will be included also. The studies of such students are envisaged as including: General Sociology, Rural Sociology, Social Research (Surveys), and Religious Sociology. It would be helpful if our representative could have the opportunity of studying, before leaving Ireland, the programmes in the subjects mentioned, at U.S. universities, especially the Catholic Universities.

A further question which needs to be discussed is: who will be recognized as the Irish agency for selecting students and the U.S. agency for allocating scholarships and directing studies.

Rev. Maurice Morrissey, P.P.,  
National Charman, Muintir na Tire,  
Muintir na Tire Headquarters,  
Tipperary, Ireland

**Document B**

Muintir na Tire Headquarters,  
Tipperary  
12<sup>th</sup> March, 1958

Most Rev. Dr. Cushing,  
Archbishop of Boston,  
2101 Commonwealth Avenue,  
Brighton 35,  
Mass.,  
USA

Your Excellency,

Though my greetings may be slightly late, I wish to send you at St. Patrick's Day the best wishes of Muintir na Tire for every grace, blessing and protection. We were rather shocked recently to read of some threats that had been made against you. May you have St. Patrick's breastplate to shield you against all dangers. I know how much Canon Hayes, God rest him, valued your great support and friendship and indeed the search of his papers turned up quite a collection of your grand encouraging letters.

Frank Lyddy has shown me your letter of January 7<sup>th</sup>. For this latest encouragement and for all the help you have so generously given to Canon Hayes, R.I.P., and to Muintir na Tire, I can only say 'May God reward you'. I sometimes feel that the real Irish patriots are outside of Ireland; we need such great visions and great hearts.

We realise that training is urgently needed to make the best use of our resources. We are therefore very keen on having Irish students trained in General and Special Sociology in Universities in the United States. To explain our concept of this project I enclose a short memorandum which, I hope, will prove helpful. I may mention that we are interested in having some priests among the trainees, for several reasons: priests are more firmly anchored to Ireland than lay students who might take up teaching posts elsewhere, and besides Muintir na Tire, being rooted in the parish, will always depend on the interest of the diocesan clergy.

Following Your Excellency's suggestion about sending a representative to the U.S. to confer with the university authorities, we went in search of a suitable representative and we regard ourselves as fortunate in having persuaded the Rev. Jeremiah Newman M.A., D.Ph., Professor of Catholic Sociology and Catholic Action, Maynooth, to undertake the work of envoy in this matter. Owing to his other commitments his time for this mission is limited to July–August, say all July or six weeks during those two months. This perhaps is not the ideal time for making contact with the university authorities but we hope that some useful work may be done and as he is sympathetic to Muintir na Tire and keenly interested in this particular project it would be hard to find another so well fitted for the mission.

Now I hope I may trespass further on your kindness by asking the most suitable time during July–August for a visit to the U.S. universities, and hoping that we may presume to leave in your hands the arrangement of contacts and itinerary. I am sure that it would be useful if Dr. Newman could have some information regarding the courses available at the Catholic Universities (Faculties of Sociology) before he leaves Ireland. The information might be sent direct to Dr. Newman at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Ireland.

The lack of trained personnel in the various branches of Sociology hinders us from even preparing a proper programme of social surveys for submission to a Foundation. We are about to submit a request to the Irish Department of Agriculture for assistance financed from the Grant Counterpart Fund towards a pilot survey of the rural areas in Co. Limerick as a beginning. We cannot tell how this request will be received as social surveys are practically an unknown quantity here. Through Dr. Newman we hope to get in touch with a Dutch rural sociologist, Professor Hofstee of Wageningen, to bring him to lecture here during Rural Week (August 1958) and perhaps to obtain advice or direction from him. There is no substitute for native personnel, hence our interest in post-graduate studies.

Mrs. Stephen Rynne (Alice Curtayne) has reported on the kind reception you gave her. I am confident that Stephen will produce a good biography of Canon John Hayes – but the best biography cannot contain all that made him great among the great ones.

I Commend Muintir na Tire and myself to Your Excellency's prayers. May God reward you for everything.

Your Excellency's devoted friend,  
Maurice Morrissey, P.P.,  
National Chairman

**Notes**

- 1 I am indebted to Fr. David Bracken (Limerick Diocesan Archives), Noelle Dowling (Dublin Diocesan Archives), Fr. Christy O'Dwyer (Cashel and Emly Diocesan Archives) and Jane Stoeffler (American Catholic History Research Center and University Archives, The Catholic University of America, Washington, DC) for their assistance in identifying and locating material.
- 2 National Archives Department of the Taoiseach S 10,618 Muintir na Tire General File, Deputation from Muintir na Tire to an Taoiseach, Wednesday, 25 January, 1961 Memorandum submitted to An Taoiseach.
- 3 A state receiving US dollar aid under the Marshall Plan was obliged to deposit in a special account a local currency sum equivalent to the value of the dollars it had been given. These local currency funds were known as counterpart funds and they were intended for developmental use. US dollar aid could take the form of either grants or loans. Between 1948 and 1952 Ireland received \$18 million in grants and \$128.2 million in loans (Whelan 2000: 127). The way in which the specific uses to be made of the local currency funds was decided varied according to whether the dollars to which they formed the counterpart were loaned or granted. If loaned, then the recipient country's government decided how the counterpart funds should be spent. If granted, the expenditure of counterpart funds had to be agreed between the recipient government and the US authorities. Loan counterpart was fairly quickly expended by the Irish government (mostly on land reclamation) while protracted negotiation of agreements between Irish and US governments held up the spending of grant counterpart until the late 1950s (Whelan 2000: 286–314; Murray 2009a: 59–61). For the full list of grant counterpart projects eventually agreed between the USA and Ireland see Whelan (2000) Table 7.2.
- 4 Limerick Diocesan Archives (LDA) Jeremiah Newman Papers, Correspondence, Thomas Morris to Jeremiah Newman 1 May 1958.
- 5 The Consultants listed by LRS reports were – (USA) Prof. Lloyd Warner, Chicago, Prof. C. Mihanovich, St. Louis; (Netherlands) Prof. E. W. Hofstee, Wageningen, Mr. J. Lijfering, Wageningen; (Britain) Prof. M.P. Fogarty, Cardiff, Dr. H. Bracey, Bristol; (Ireland) Dr. T. Walsh, Director, Agricultural Institute, Dr. H. Spain, Director, Department of Agriculture Advisory Service, Dr. M.D. McCarthy, Director, CSO, Dr. E.F. O'Doherty, UCD, Prof. J. Lyons, UCC.
- 6 'In a difficult period the movement has gained ground – reports Honorary National Secretary', *Landmark*, August 1958: American Catholic History Research Center and University Archives, Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., George Gilmory Higgins Papers, Box 46, Folder 7, Newman, Jeremiah, St Patrick's College, Ireland 1956–58, biographical data, Rev. Jeremiah Newman, M.A., D. Ph.
- 7 LDA Jeremiah Newman Papers, Correspondence, Thomas Morris to Jeremiah Newman 28 February 1958.
- 8 *Ibid.*
- 9 The Irish Countrywomen's Association, Muintir na Tire and Macra na Feirme were each earmarked an allocation of £10,000 from the Grant Counterpart Fund. From a reserve fund that was initially set aside to cover contingencies an additional £4,000 was subsequently allocated to each of the three organisations.
- 10 LDA Jeremiah Newman Papers, Correspondence, copy Maurice Morrissey to Scott McLeod 12 March 1958.
- 11 LDA Jeremiah Newman Papers, Correspondence, copy Archbishop Cushing to Maurice Morrissey 11 April 1958.



- 12 LDA Jeremiah Newman Papers, Correspondence, Archbishop Cushing to Jeremiah Newman 26 June 1958.
- 13 American Catholic History Research Center and University Archives, Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., George Gilmary Higgins Papers, Box 46, Folder 7, Newman, Jeremiah, St. Patrick's College, Ireland 1956–58.
- 14 LDA Jeremiah Newman Papers, Correspondence, Memorandum on Visit to America – 1958 Rev. J. Newman April, 1959, p. 1.
- 15 *Ibid.*, pp. 2 and 4.
- 16 *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- 17 *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- 20 LDA Jeremiah Newman Papers, Box 201, folder Limerick Rural Survey
- 21 Dublin Diocesan Archives (DDA) McQuaid Papers AB8/XXI/126/4 Christus Rex, James Kavanagh to John Charles McQuaid, 30 November 1959, John Charles McQuaid to James Kavanagh, 2 December 1959.
- 22 DDA McQuaid Papers AB8/B/XV/C/194–264 Hierarchy Correspondence Cashel and Emly, Thomas Morris to John Charles McQuaid 17 July 1960 [238] and 29 September 1960 [241].
- 23 A number of other Cashel and Emly priests undertook postgraduate studies in Social Science at UCD later in the 1960s: personal communication from Fr. Christy O'Dwyer, Diocesan Archivist.
- 24 UCG's contribution is hard to assess given the absence of relevant secondary historical literature on that institution.

## References

- Bryman, A. 2008. *Social Research Methods*, third edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Byrne, A., R. Edmondson and T. Varley 2001. 'Introduction to the third edition', pp. I–CI in C.M. Arensberg and S.T. Kimball (eds), *Family and Community in Ireland*, third edition. Ennis: CLASP Press.
- Conway, B. 2006. 'Foreigners, faith and fatherland: the historical origins and present status of Irish sociology', *Sociological Origins*, Special Supplement to 5(1): 1–36.
- Conway, B. 2011. 'Catholic sociology in Ireland in comparative perspective', *American Sociologist* 42(1): 34–55.
- Cooney, J. 1999. *John Charles McQuaid: Ruler of Catholic Ireland*. Dublin: O'Brien Press.
- Daly, M.E. 2002. *The First Department: A History of the Department of Agriculture*. Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.
- Garvin, T. 1998. 'The strange death of clerical politics in University College, Dublin', *Irish University Review* 28(2): 308–14.
- Gaughan, J.A. 1986. *Alfred O'Rahilly. 1 Academic*. Dublin: Kingdom Books.
- Gaughan, J.A. 1989. *Alfred O'Rahilly. 2 Public Figure*. Dublin: Kingdom Books.
- Gaughan, J.A. 1992. *Alfred O'Rahilly. 3 Controversialist. Part 1, Social Reformer*. Dublin: Kingdom Books.
- Gaughan, J.A. 1993. *Alfred O'Rahilly. 3 Controversialist. Part 2, Catholic Apologist*. Dublin: Kingdom Books.
- Gidley, B. 2004. 'Doing historical and archival research', pp. 249–64 in C. Seale (ed.), *Researching Society and Culture Second Edition*. London: Sage.

- Goldthorpe, J., L. O'Dowd and P. O'Connor 2002. 'Symposium: a sociology of Ireland by Hilary Tovey and Perry Share', *Irish Journal of Sociology* 11(1): 97–109.
- Hepburn, A.C. and B. Collins 1981. 'Industrial society: the structure of Belfast, 1901', pp. 210–28 in P. Roebuck (ed.), *From Plantation to Partition: Essays in Ulster History in Honour of J.L. McCracken*. Belfast: Blackstaff Press.
- Hill, M.R. 1993. *Archival Strategies and Techniques*. London: Sage.
- Jackson, J.A. 2004. 'Research policy and practice in Ireland: a historical perspective', pp. 23–40 in M. MacLachlan and M. Caball (eds), *Social Science in the Knowledge Society: Research Policy in Ireland*. Dublin: Liffey Press.
- L'Estrange, S. 2007a. "'A community of communities" – Catholic communitarianism and societal crisis in Ireland, 1890s–1950s', *Journal of Historical Sociology* 20(4): 555–78.
- L'Estrange, S. 2007b. 'Religious Authority, Religious Rule: The Priesthood, Politics and the Promotion of the "Reign of Christ" in Mid-twentieth Century Ireland', *European Journal of Sociology* 48(2): 239–61.
- McCulloch, G. 2004. *Documentary Research in Education, History and the Social Sciences*. London: Routledge.
- Manning, M. 1999. *James Dillon: A Biography*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan.
- Murray, P. 2005. *The Pitfalls of Pioneering Sociological Research: The Case of the Tavistock Institute on the Dublin Buses in the Early 1960s*. NIRSA Working Paper 25, [www.nuim.ie/nirsa/research/pdf/WPS25.pdf](http://www.nuim.ie/nirsa/research/pdf/WPS25.pdf), accessed 16 July 2012.
- Murray, P. 2009a. *Facilitating the Future? US Aid, European Integration and Irish Industrial Viability, 1948–73*. Dublin: UCD Press.
- Murray, P. 2009b. *Belting the Irish State with US Croziers: Theatre, Tourism, UN Policy and Church-State Relations, 1957–58*. NIRSA Working Paper 54, [www.nuim.ie/nirsa/research/documents/WP\\_Murray\\_Belting\\_Irish\\_State\\_with\\_Croziers.pdf](http://www.nuim.ie/nirsa/research/documents/WP_Murray_Belting_Irish_State_with_Croziers.pdf), accessed 16 July 2012.
- Murray, P. and M. Feeney 2010. *Muintir na Tire Seeks Funding for Rural Sociology in 1960s Ireland*. NIRSA Working Paper 63, [www.nuim.ie/nirsa/research/documents/wp63\\_murray\\_feeney\\_muintir\\_na\\_tire.pdf](http://www.nuim.ie/nirsa/research/documents/wp63_murray_feeney_muintir_na_tire.pdf), accessed 16 July 2012.
- Murray, P. and M. Feeney 2011. 'The market for sociological ideas in early 1960s Ireland: Civil Service departments and the Limerick Rural Survey, 1961–64', *Administration* 59(1): 111–31.
- Newman, J. 1964. 'Preface', pp. vii–ix in J. Newman (ed.), *The Limerick Rural Survey*. Tipperary: Muintir na Tire Publications.
- O'Grady, J.P. 1988. 'J.W. Fulbright and the Fulbright Program in Ireland', *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 47(1): 47–69.
- O'Leary, D. 2004. 'Vocationalism in emergency Ireland', pp. 230–43 in D. Keogh and M. O'Driscoll (eds), *Ireland in World War Two: Diplomacy and Survival*. Cork: Mercier Press.
- Prior, L. 2003. *Using Documents in Social Research*. London: Sage.
- Prior, L. 2008. 'Repositioning documents in social research', *Sociology* 42(5): 821–36.
- Prior, L. (ed.) 2011. *Using Documents and Records in Social Research*. London: Sage.
- Rynne, S. 1960. *Father John Hayes, Founder of Muintir na Tire, The People of the Land*. Dublin: Clonmore and Reynolds.
- Savage, M. 2005. 'Working-class identities in the 1960s: revisiting the affluent worker study', *Sociology* 39(5): 929–46.
- Scott, J. 1990. *A Matter of Record: Documentary Sources in Social Research*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Scott, J. (ed.) 2006. *Documentary Research*. London: Sage.

- Smith, J.H. 1987. 'Elton Mayo and the hidden Hawthorne', *Work Employment and Society* 1(1): 107–20.
- Tierney, M. 2004. *The Story of Muintir na Tire 1931–2001: The First Seventy Years*. Tipperary: Muintir na Tire.
- Tiratsoo, N. and M. Clapson 2001. 'The Ford Foundation and social planning in Britain: the case of the Institute of Community Studies and *Family and Kinship in East London*', pp. 201–17 in G. Gemelli (ed.), *American Foundations and Large-Scale Research: Construction and Transfer of Knowledge*. Bologna: CLUEB.
- Tovey, H. 1992. 'Rural sociology in Ireland: a review', *Irish Journal of Sociology* 2: 96–121.
- Ward, C. 1964. 'Socio-religious research in Ireland', *Social Compass* 11(3): 25–9.
- Whelan, B. 2000. *Ireland and the Marshall Plan, 1947–57*. Dublin: Four Courts Press.
- Whyte, J.H. 1980. *Church and State in Modern Ireland 1923–1979*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan.