Newman University Church, Dublin

Architectural revivalism in the British Isles and the authority of form

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For my mother

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1
The idea of a university church

> I have in my former report given some of my reasons for thinking
> a University Church to be of great and various importance … The
> beautiful and imposing structure, built simply out of zeal for the
> University, has given it a sort of bodily presence in Dublin.[1]

In June of 1854, John Henry Newman (21 February 1801–11 August
1890), prominent leader of the Oxford Movement and then famous
convert to Roman Catholicism, was officially installed as the first
rector of the Catholic University of Ireland.[2] His time in Dublin has not
been deemed an overwhelming success – save for the medical school
that he founded there and his famous lectures on liberal education,
delivered in Dublin and now compiled as *The Idea of a University*. The
Romano-Byzantine church that he built there, his first objective when
he agreed to the rectorship, has been somewhat overlooked, despite the
fact that it was intended as a physical embodiment of what Newman
wished to achieve in and through the new university (Figure 1.1).[3]

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1   Newman, *My Campaign* I, 69–71.
2   The bibliographic material available on Newman is vast. For a select bibliography on his
    writings, theology and educational thought, and for the standard editions of his works, see
    Schmidt, 'Selected bibliography'. For an excellent critical review of the state of Newman
    scholarship, see Nockles, 'The current state of Newman scholarship'. See, in particular, Ker,
    John Henry Newman; Ker and Merrigan, *The Cambridge Companion to John Henry Newman*;
    Aquino and King, *The Oxford Handbook of John Henry Newman*; Aquino and King, *Receptions
    of Newman*; Garland, 'Newman in his own day'; Gilley, *Newman and his Age*; Ker and Hill,
    Newman After a Hundred Years; Brown, *Newman: A man for our time*.
3   A short pamphlet, Wilson, *Newman's Church*, was published in 1916. See also Curran,
    Newman House and University Church; Gaughan, *Newman's University Church*. There are just
    two journal articles dedicated to the church to date: Kane, 'John Henry Newman's University
    Church in Dublin' of 1977, revisited in 2007, and McCarthy, 'University Church'. McGrath, in

Figure 1.1 John Hungerford Pollen, University Church, Dublin, built for John Henry Newman, 1855–6. Interior showing the view from the antechapel towards the apse. © Niamh Bhalla with kind permission of Newman University Church

Indeed, Newman's University Church has received insufficient attention, in terms of both Newman's achievements and the noteworthy place that the building occupies within the history of Victorian revivalist architectures.

The architectural significance of Newman's Dublin church has hitherto gone unheeded, largely because of its location, in what was then a subjugated, Catholic-majority region of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and because of its connection to the early history of the marginalised Byzantine revival, which sat awkwardly in Victorian worldviews due to perceived links to both the Oriental East and the Orthodox Church.[4] This book explores the meaningful connection between the church's context and the ambiguity of its style, which drew upon the features of Roman and Byzantine basilicas in a homage to 'early Christian' architecture. It examines how from the intersection of these two aspects a significant monument was created; one that is necessary to a more comprehensive understanding of the Victorian use of the medieval imaginary. Placing the church within its proper historical, architectural and aesthetic contexts – particularly within the history of round-arched historicist styles – will address lacunae in Victorian studies and demonstrate that a sustained and significant use of the Byzantine style began in ecclesiastical architecture in the British Isles somewhat earlier than previously thought. The study of University Church will also make clear that comparable motivations lay behind the use of the Romano-Byzantine style in Dublin and more well-known Byzantine revival buildings that emerged towards the end of the nineteenth century in Britain.

University Church provides unique insights into the increased use of the Byzantine style from the 1850s, as what J. B. Bullen has described as a mode of disrupting the status quo.[5] Indeed, the architectural and decorative choices made in Dublin were intended as a tangible manifestation of the 'Idea' behind this unprecedented Catholic university – the posing of an erudite Catholic alternative to post-Enlightenment secularism and Protestant hegemony, through a style-based analogy

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his still-authoritative work on Newman's university, *Newman's University*, devotes a chapter to the church. Nicholls, *Unearthly Beauty*, 231–72, discusses the Dublin church in relation to Newman's aesthetics and his Birmingham Oratory.

4 The recent *Oxford Handbook of Victorian Medievalism*, for example, focuses on the Gothic revival and does not include anything on Byzantine reception in the aesthetics and culture of nineteenth-century Britain. Parker and Wagner, *The Oxford Handbook of Victorian Medievalism*.

5 This book agrees with and builds upon J. B. Bullen's argument that the Byzantine style was often used to refute the present across Europe. Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*.

to the ancient church.[6] Newman's Romano-Byzantine church formed a defence of Catholicity and heralded a statement of intent for a new social placement for Catholics, particularly those in the British Isles who were making new gains following post-Reformation persecution. In the present volume, Newman's church is explored as a tangible outworking of his convictions as they intersected with the exigencies of his context in Dublin – as a 'bodily presence' for the university.

John Henry Newman and the Catholic university

John Henry Newman was born and brought up in London as a member of the Church of England. He became an undergraduate at Oxford University and remained there after being elected a fellow of Oriel College on 12 April 1822, taking on various posts as a college tutor and examiner. He was ordained an Anglican priest on 29 May 1825 and continued at the university as the vicar of St Mary's University Church. In this role, Newman was at the forefront of the Oxford Movement, writing many of the *Tracts for the Times*, from 1833–41, and preaching regularly in support of the Anglo-Catholic revival which sought to re-incorporate ancient Christian traditions and ritual into the theology and liturgy of the Anglican church.[7] Newman thus spent over 20 years of his life at Oxford in various positions, and it remained formative for him thereafter in terms of his theology, philosophy of education and his views on art and architecture.[8]

It was during his studies at Oriel College that Newman became increasingly drawn to the teachings of the early church fathers and the patristic church.[9] Newman began to re-evaluate apostolic succession

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6   For Newman, every aspect of the political and social system in Britain was dominated by Protestantism. He discussed the persecution of Catholics at length in his controversial *Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics in England*, which he delivered during the Papal Aggression crisis of 1850–1 and which led to him being brought to court for libel. See particularly, Newman, *Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics*, 363–73. On Newman's 'idea' of Christianity in relation to the university, see Merrigan, 'Is a Catholic University a good "idea"?', esp. 3–8.

7   Members of the University of Oxford, *Tracts for the Times*. On the Oxford Movement, see, selectively and for further bibliography, Newman, *The 'Via Media'*; Herring, *The Oxford Movement in Practice*; Nockles and Brown, *The Oxford Movement*; Vaiss, *From Oxford to the People*; Nockles, *The Oxford Movement in Context*; Newsome, *The Convert Cardinals*; Yates, *The Oxford Movement*.

8   Colin Barr attributes all of Newman's educational beliefs to 'the Oriel common room', such as the value he placed on a classic rather than utilitarian education. Colin Barr, 'Ireland', 50. See also Culler, *Imperial Intellect*, 1–122.

9   His first major theological work was devoted to *The Arians of the Fourth Century* (1833), for example, a work on patristics that, like all of his future endeavours, was created in response to

and the authority of the Church through history as the guardian of the immutable truths of Christianity, gradually disassociating himself from evangelicals within the Church of England. His fascination with patristic theology and the continuity of the Church eventually caused insurmountable tension with his Protestant faith and led to his conversion to Roman Catholicism on 9 October 1845 and his subsequent ordination as a Catholic priest on 30 May 1847, with Newman claiming, 'The Fathers made me a Catholic'.[10] He continued to study patristics for the duration of his life, and his design for University Church in Dublin was intimately connected to his ecclesiology, built in response to its immediate purpose and context.

At the end of the 1840s, Pope Pius IX (1846–78) expressed his desire for a Catholic university in Ireland. The year 1845 had provided a catalyst for this decision when the British Government elected to establish secular, non-denominational Queen's Colleges in Galway, Cork and Belfast (which opened their doors in October 1849 and were established formally by royal charter as the Queen's University of Ireland in 1850), responding to the problematic 'university question' for Irish Catholics which had persisted following the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829.[11] Protestant hegemony in higher education had long been a contentious issue in Ireland. Trinity College, the first and only college of the University of Dublin, had been founded in 1592 and had nominally permitted Catholics following the Roman Catholic Relief act of 1793, but few attended given that many Irish Catholics came from subsistence farmsteads, while those who could afford education were deterred by Protestant ascendency there.[12] Prime Minister Robert Peel (1788–1850) conceded the need for higher education for Irish Catholics, but the provision of government funding for a Catholic university in Great Britain or Ireland was out of the question. The Queen's Colleges were an attempt

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the contingencies of his own context. Newman, *The Arians*. On Newman's response to and use of patristic theology as evolving in response to his circumstances, see King, *Newman and the Alexandrian Fathers*.

10 Newman, 'A Letter Addressed to the Rev. E. B. Pusey', Newman, *Letters and Diaries* 2, 24. On Newman and the early church fathers, and his ecclesiology more generally, see Shea, *Newman's Early Roman Catholic Legacy*; Lang, 'Newman and the Fathers'; Daley, 'The Church Fathers'; Dietz, 'John Henry Newman and the Fathers'; Daley, 'Newman and the Alexandrian Tradition'. For a view that challenges any singular conception of Newman's 'Catholic Ecclesiology', see Marr, *To be Perfect is to Have Changed Often*.

11 Scholar of the Catholic University of Ireland, *The Queen's Colleges*. For accessible introductions to the complex context, see Larkin, *The Making of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland*; Fraser, *The King and the Catholics*; Geoghegan, *King Dan*; Jenkins, *Era of Emancipation*. See also, Wolffe, *The Protestant Crusade*.

12 Catholics were ineligible for scholarships and fellowships, for example. Culler, *Imperial Intellect*, 124.

to provide university education for Irish Catholics without the perception of attempted proselytisation. These non-residential colleges were largely intended to provide professional education for the emergent middle classes.

Episcopal reaction to these secular 'Godless Colleges', as they became known, and to the idea of co-education between Catholics and Protestants more broadly, was mixed and caused division among the Irish Catholic clergy.[13] John McHale (1791–1881), Archbishop of Tuam, and Michael Slattery (1783–1857), Archbishop of Cashel, led the majority group who opposed the colleges as perilous, while William Crolly (1780–1849), Archbishop of Armagh, and Daniel Murray (1768–1852), Archbishop of Dublin, accepted the colleges as progress in the absence of a viable alternative.[14] Rome eventually condemned the colleges and authorised the opening of a specifically Catholic university in Ireland, along the lines of the successful Catholic university in Louvain, re-founded by the Belgian episcopate in 1834.

Paul Cullen (1803–78), former rector of the Irish College in Rome, was appointed to the prestigious See of Armagh in December 1849, and then transferred to the See of Dublin on 1 May 1852, and it was the ultramontanist Cullen who secured support from both Rome and then the Irish clergy for the Catholic university in Dublin, achieving agreement at the national synod at Thurles in August 1850 on the basis of a rescript from the Vatican Congregation of Propaganda Fide and the instruction of Pope Pius.[15] On 12 November 1851, Cullen achieved consensus among the Irish episcopate and Newman was offered the rectorship, with Cullen hoping that the appointment of a renowned Oxford convert would procure authority for the venture in the face of opposition. Opinion continued to be divided among the bishops on the desirability of a Catholic university overseen by Rome, which some feared might allow for too much papal interference in the complex Irish context. Newman, although generally warmly received, was met with a frosty reception from some of the bishops when he travelled to secure

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13 This phrase, popularised by Daniel O'Connell (1775–1847), the leader of the movement for Catholic emancipation in Ireland, was used widely by those who opposed them. On the Queen's Colleges and their reception, see Culler, *Imperial Intellect*, 123–30; McGrath, *Newman's University*; Shrimpton, *Making of Men*. On O'Connell, see Geoghegan, 'The Impact of O'Connell'.

14 On the intricacies and complexities of the positions of the Irish bishops in Ireland on university education, see Barr, 'Ireland'; Garland, 'Newman', 277. For a concise summary of these complex issues, see Barr, 'The re-energising of Catholicism'.

15 He also sourced funding, perhaps surprisingly, from the poor Irish laity for the most part. See Shrimpton, *Making of Men,* 57–8; Larkin, *The Making of the Roman Catholic Church*.

their support shortly after arriving in Ireland, particularly from those influenced by Cullen's predecessor Murray who had elected to support the secular Queen's Colleges and who was not supportive of Cullen's papal commission to establish a Catholic university in Ireland. In a letter of 24 February 1854, written during this tour, Newman noted that it would be very difficult for him not to become entangled in the politics and disagreements rife between the Irish bishops.[16] Continued dissention among the Irish bishops proved an enduring issue for Newman during his tenure in Dublin.

Aside from the fragmented politics of the ecclesiastical landscape, the famine had recently decimated the Irish population through starvation, death and emigration from 1845–52.[17] Despite pre- and post-famine expansion of the 'middle classes' – comprising merchants, industrialists, professionals and retailers – the impact of industrialisation was not as far-reaching as in England: much of the Irish economy was still agricultural with many Irish Catholics surviving as tenant farmers, and their eviction by landowners had led also to civil unrest and the positioning of a standing army in Ireland.[18] Wealthy landowners in Ireland were largely of English descent, members of the Church of Ireland whose sons attended Trinity College.[19] Many scholars have seen Newman's venture as destined to fail from the outset because of the socio-economic climate in which it was founded. Arthur Dwight Culler in his still-authoritative study of Newman's educational ideal succinctly attributes the university's inevitable failure to the 'lack of a charter for granting degrees' because it was a private institution, along with 'the division and hostility among the bishops, the dearth of pupils, and the simple poverty of the land'.[20] Newman's university went into a steep decline following his departure but what remained was eventually absorbed into the Royal University of Ireland in 1880, the predecessor institution of what is now University College Dublin.

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16 Newman, 'Letter from Thurles to James Hope Scott'. *Letters and Diaries* 16, 56.

17 Crowley et al. *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine*.

18 On the post-famine emergent middle classes, and particularly the expansion of service sector employment, see Bielenberg, 'The Irish Economy', 199–202. For an excellent and critical survey of the expanding middle classes in Ireland between the late eighteenth and late nineteenth century, 'that amorphous category of people in between those in want and those who never knew what', see O'Neill, 'Bourgeois Ireland'. On the foundation of the university against this backdrop, see Shrimpton, *Making of Men*, 57.

19 See Garland, 'Newman in his own day', 272.

20 Culler, *Imperial Intellect*, 170. In its first year, between 3 November 1854 and June 1855, the university matriculated 38 students who were largely sons of the emergent Irish Catholic middle class, the English Catholic elite and some European aristocrats. See Barr, 'Ireland', 66. The most detailed analysis of the historical and political context within which the university was established is McGrath, *Newman's University*.

The need for a university church

The Catholic University of Ireland was formally established on 18 May 1854 with a faculty of letters, or liberal arts, and it opened its doors at number 86 St Stephen's Green on 3 November 1854. Newman remained in post until he formally resigned on 12 November 1858, having returned to the Oratory of St Philip Neri in Birmingham, which he remained head of and continued to visit during his time in Ireland.[21] In a letter to fellow Oratorian Richard Stanton on 12 March 1854, he discussed his plan to begin with a university church that would make the university visible to the public once a week.[22] From the outset, he envisaged the church as both a tangible representation of the university and a means of achieving its aims within its Irish context, saying 'it will maintain and symbolise that great principle in which we glory as our characteristic, the union of Science and Religion'.[23] His words resonated with the fundamental impetus for the Catholic university as outlined by the Irish episcopate in their 'Address to the people of Ireland' issued from Thurles in support of the new university, which decried secularism, describing 'the separation of religion from science' as 'one of the greatest calamities of modern times'. The driving motivation behind the establishment of the university was 'the perfection of knowledge' which came from 'the union of both'.[24] Newman's church, built on his own initiative and connected inextricably to his vision as rector, embodied his mission in Dublin. Describing his rationale for building the church, he said:

> I thought – (1) Nothing was a more simple and complete advertisement of the University than a large Church open for worship … (2) It symbolized the great principle of the University … (3) It provided for University formal acts, for Degree-giving, for solemn lectures and addresses … a large hall at once, and one which was ennobled by the religious symbols which were its furniture.[25]

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21 Newman intended his university to eventually have five faculties – the four medieval faculties, plus science, elevated from being a subdivision of the school of arts according to the precedent of the Catholic University of Louvain. He attempted to realise all but theology, ironically, given that he left this for the bishops to establish, but only medicine and the arts were successful. Culler, *Imperial Intellect*, 159.

22 Newman, *Letters and Diaries* 16, 83.

23 Newman, *My Campaign* I, 24.

24 McGrath, *Newman's University*, 101.

25 Newman, *My Campaign* I, 290–1.

His church was conceived with practical requirements in mind, but it also had a decidedly symbolic role. It was intended to both express and form part of the realisation of the idea behind the university, but it remains to discuss how it achieved this, and why a Romano-Byzantine style was chosen to represent its essence and achieve its aims.

Before the church's present site at St Stephen's Green was decided upon, Newman considered entering an agreement with the existing neoclassical church of St Audoen's at Cornmarket, Dublin, built between 1841–7, to use it as the university's church. Having a particular style of church was evidently less important for Newman than having *a* church that would confer presence and legitimacy on the new university and serve its liturgical and practical needs. Writing to Archbishop Cullen on 23 February 1855, Newman stated:

> I think soon of coming to some agreement with Mr Mooney about St Audoen's. Time is getting on, and it certainly will do us harm if we don't make more a *show*. The sort of impatience you feel at Rome to hear that something is *doing*, is only a specimen of what is felt here. Now there is nothing which will *tell* so much in this way as a University Church.[26]

The arrangement with St Audoen's did not materialise and ultimately Newman acquired instead number 87 St Stephen's Green beside University House – the Georgian mansion within which the university was located at number 86 St Stephen's Green. Newman signed the agreement on 23 June 1855, and he built University Church in the garden to the rear of number 87, accessed by means of a narrow atrium between the two houses (see Figure 2.1).[27] John Hungerford Pollen (1820–1902), whom Newman had appointed to the Chair of Fine Arts at the university that year, was charged with drawing up plans for a basilican church, and the building company contracted to complete the church, Beardwood & Co. of Westland Row, set to work immediately according to his instruction.

Pollen was born in London in 1820, the second son of Richard Pollen of Rodbourne, Wiltshire, and Anne Cockerell, sister of architect Charles Robert Cockerell (1788–1863). Like Newman, Pollen attended Oxford and he too had converted to Roman Catholicism, in 1852. In Newman's first letter to Pollen on 24 December 1854, Newman confirmed the urgency of their need for a university church and the importance

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26 *Letters and Diaries* 16, 389. Emphases are Newman's.
27 Newman, 'Letter to FS Bowles'. *Letters and Diaries* 16, 492.

of its decoration, saying, '… we *must* have a Church, temporary or permanent, and it must be decorated'.[28] Newman decided upon the overall design of an early Christian basilica. An 'Architectural Description of the University Church' was issued on 3 April 1856 in the *Catholic University Gazette*, which attributed the decision to build the church to 'the Rector', describing the inspiration for the building as having been 'furnished by those deeply impressive and historical structures, the early Italian basilicas'.[29] Newman described Pollen as having been entrusted with the execution of his vision for the church, and Pollen designed the church in a style that drew upon both the Roman and Byzantine basilicas of Italy.[30] Newman said of Pollen that he was employed 'as architect, or rather decorator', making clear the key role that Pollen played, particularly in relation to the interior of the church which constituted its most important aspect given the nature of the site and its basilican design.[31] The description in the *Gazette* called Pollen 'the architect, painter and decorator', explaining that the 'general proportions' had been given to him by Newman.

There has been some disagreement over the relative weightings to ascribe to Newman and Pollen in the design of the church, and many have wanted to see it as owing entirely to either one or the other.[32] Their letters to one another testify very clearly, however, to a close and productive working relationship between the two men on all matters related to its design and decoration, which led to the final form of the church.[33] For instance, on 4 June 1855, Newman writes to Pollen thanking him for the plan that he has drawn up which he very much approves of, and by April 1856 Newman was crediting Pollen with having made the church 'gorgeous'.[34] The design emerged from the remarkable partnership between Newman and Pollen, which brought the considerable and varied knowledge and experience of these two men together in the context of providing for the needs of the Catholic university in Dublin. The church that resulted unavoidably developed from the wider context of nineteenth-century historicist

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28   *Letters and Diaries* 16, 331–2.
29   'Architectural description of the University Church', the *Catholic University Gazette,* vol. 51, 3 April 1856, 57.
30   Newman, *My Campaign* I, 294.
31   *My Campaign* I, 294.
32   The disagreement is discussed in Kane, 'John Henry Newman's Catholic University Church revisited', esp. 10.
33   The tendency to see the church's design as owing entirely to Newman has resulted in part from reading Newman's letters to Pollen, but not Pollen's to Newman.
34   *Letters and Diaries* 16, 476; Newman, 'Letter to Henry Wilberforce', 29 April 1856. *Letters and Diaries* 17, 229.

architectural styles, and the accompanying discourses on aesthetics that permeated the intellectual circles that both Newman and Pollen moved in: it needs to be reframed as such, rather than remaining siloed as an esoteric design ascribed purely to the brilliance of either of these men. University Church opened on Ascension Day, 1 May 1856, with a pontifical High Mass celebrated by Cullen, and its decoration was completed in the months that followed. Though having a university church of any style, rather than none, was most important to Newman, it will become clear that his opting initially for a host church in a classical rather than Gothic style was not fortuitous. Furthermore, the decisions taken, having acquired a fresh site, provide telling insights into Newman's perception of the Dublin university, as Pollen interpreted and executed his vision.

Newman and Pollen created a simple aisleless basilica, terminating in a semi-circular apse surmounted by a half-dome containing a pseudo-mosaic of the seated Virgin. This painting, executed by Pollen, responded to the twelfth-century mosaic in the apse of the upper basilica of San Clemente in Rome which was perceived as a Byzantine work of art in the nineteenth century (Figure 1.1).[35] A gallery at the back of the church and another choir gallery to the left of the sanctuary were supported by beautiful monolithic columns of variously coloured 'marbles', or polished limestones, with alabaster capitals, carved mostly with vegetal forms native to Ireland or generic Byzantinising designs. These columns were surmounted by high, round-arched arcades in both cases. The remainder of the church was sheathed in sumptuous polychromatic 'marble' inlay; archaising paintings based on the work of Raphael and connected to the Nazarene movement; and pseudo-mosaics of the saints. The sanctuary of the church was also punctuated by gilded woodwork, much of which was executed according to a Byzantinising aesthetic. The structure and decoration of the church was intended as inherently 'early Christian', drawing upon the Roman and Byzantine forms found in those 'deeply impressive' early Italian basilicas.[36] The style of the church was not a confused amalgam, but rather a meaningful choice intended to express the Catholic identity of the university which appealed to the history of the early medieval church.

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35   Discussed fully in Chapter 5.
36   'Architectural Description of the University Church'. An article in 1856, 'The new Roman Catholic University Church at Dublin', *The Builder*, vol. 14 (19 April 1856), 222, also stated that 'the whole was based on the Early Italian Basilicas'.

Nineteenth-century historicism and the style of University Church

Historicism dominated both architectural theories and endeavours of the nineteenth century; the product of a new understanding of history itself deeply influenced by German-speaking thinkers such as Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803) and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831).[37] From the late-eighteenth century onwards, there was increasing agreement that all human knowledge, cognition and production were the particular product of specific epochs and cultures, and for Hegel each age belonged to a dynamic and progressive continuum across history. Such historicist thinking, whether according to Herder's emphasis on the specificity and incomparability of each culture, or Hegel's teleology which sought to identify the causes of historical change, led to a greater awareness of and interest in the cultural outputs of various periods and civilisations, and gradually a refutation of the prioritisation of the classical tradition, particularly marked in the eighteenth century, as a universal and timeless standard to be emulated.

Debate concerning the suitability of architectural styles for the present age emerged across Europe from this new 'historical mindedness', and out of these new understandings of styles as historically determined, there arose an abstraction of those very styles from their original contexts for use in the present. Revivalist movements in art and architecture thus developed: particularly neo-medieval efforts that spoke to the history and present identity of European nations, which very often implicated religious identities.[38] The increasing secularisation of culture that stemmed from the Enlightenment – which gradually consigned religious works of art from the past to the museum, as opposed to the lived spirituality of nineteenth-century people – contributed to revivalism.[39] More than a purely conservative and reactive drive, however, many

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37 Namely Herder's *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man* (1784–91) and Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* (given in 1822–30). Meinecke, *Die Entstehung des Historismus* (trans. Meinecke, *Historicism*) is still authoritative concerning the origins of historicism in eighteenth-century German, English and French thought. On the German historicist tradition, particularly Herder, see Beiser, *The German Historicist Tradition*. On Hegel, see Beiser, 'Hegel's historicism'. On the complexities of Historicism as a term and its varied uses, see Iggers, *Historicism*.

38 On 'historical-mindedness' and how historicism impinged upon all spheres of nineteenth-century society, see Bann, *The Clothing of Clio*. For a more detailed discussion of architectural historicism, see Crook, *The Dilemma of Style*. Though focused only on Germany, Halmi, 'The anti-historicism' provides an excellent and detailed introduction to the concept.

39 On the museum as the 'home of the Muses' in this regard, see Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 455–6. For discussion see Roberts, *The Total Work of Art*, 51–2.

of the resulting historicist styles that began to dominate the façades of streetscapes across Europe in the nineteenth century can be seen as articulating a relationship to the past for present purposes.[40] University Church was no different in this regard.

As with many other historicising, round-arched-style buildings of the mid-nineteenth century, some uncertainty has persisted concerning the style of University Church. Newman requested an early basilica, but the materialisation of that desire, despite continued input from Newman, was largely entrusted to Pollen, who in his Dublin lectures very clearly situated the building as part of what he perceives as the prestigious 'early Christian' tradition of Roman and Byzantine basilicas. Before coming to Dublin, Newman had plans drawn up in 1851 by a relatively unknown French architect, Joseph-Louis Duc, for a permanent Oratory Church that would replace the temporary church being built in Birmingham. For this church too Newman had requested a basilica, but he felt that the simple Roman basilica was too 'heavy', and in a letter to Stanton he stated his preference that the basilica be infused with and enlivened by aspects of other styles, even with a 'smack of moorish and gothic', while maintaining 'the beauty of Greece', by which he meant the classical style.[41] The design created by Duc, which was never realised but which was treasured by Newman, was for an aisled basilica with barely suggested transepts and a domed crossing in plan. The façade was classicising but with traits of Lombardic Romanesque, and the interior elevation comprised a round-arched arcade supported by classicising columns with rounded clerestory windows above, as in early Christian basilicas.[42] It is clear that Newman had a predilection for basilican styles, but that he did not desire to directly emulate early Roman basilicas: a developed and enlivened form of the basilica seems to have been Newman's preference for new church projects. In Dublin, Pollen created Newman's basilica with a substantial 'smack' of the Byzantine.

The importance of the building to Byzantine revival architecture has been recognised from an early date by those writing about the church but not built upon in any great detail, and the building has largely gone unheeded within the wider history of Byzantine revival. A pamphlet of 1916 by Robert F. Wilson, who had consulted with the architect's son, argued that 'University Church is, as a matter of fact, the first revival

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40 On the relationship between medieval revivalism and modernism, see Lepine, Lodder and McKever, *Revival*, esp. 17–26; Betancourt and Taroutina, *Byzantium/Modernism*; Lepine, *Medieval Metropolis*.
41 'Letter to Richard Stanton'. *Letters and Diaries* 14, 295.
42 For the drawings and on the architect, see O'Donnell, 'Louis Joseph'.

of Byzantine architecture in Europe', and that this style was chosen by Pollen as such.[43] Eileen Kane's article of 1977, revisited in 2007, one of only a few academic publications focused on the church's style to date, describes and traces the origins of many of the features of the church and notes that the church should be understood as a material expression of Newman's university.[44] Building on Kane's observation, I delve further here into interpretation of how the style of the church expressed the essence of Newman's university. Newman and Pollen were building with the purpose of expressing the Catholic identity of the Dublin university within the context of burgeoning historicisms in architecture that were often loaded with meaning and authority, and within this context they carefully selected the style of the church.

In what follows, I discuss the church as designed in the form of an early basilica according to Newman's wishes, with an interior largely conceived and executed by Pollen which drew upon the basilicas and Byzantine churches of Italy to realise Newman's vision. Pollen worked in close collaboration with Newman at every stage, who at times overruled his judgements but appeared to trust him implicitly and indeed they remained good friends long after Dublin. I term its hybrid style 'Romano-Byzantine' as a shorthand throughout to convey the complexities of its style – encompassing not only its primary constituent elements drawn from the art and architecture of early Christian and medieval Rome and Byzantine buildings, particularly those of Ravenna and Venice, but also Pollen's conception of an evolutionary continuum between the two.[45] In evoking round-arched, pre-Gothic architectural styles and incorporating Byzantine and medievalising forms and decoration, the style was connected to, but not synonymous with, movements like the Rundbogenstil (round-arched style) in Germany and the Neo-Romanesque revival in England. Its paintings were also connected to the Nazarene and Pre-Raphaelite movements. The following chapters situate the church in relation to the various historicising traditions that are necessary to a full understanding of University Church, but which cannot entirely explain it, and, in particular, University Church is

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43 Wilson, *Newman's Church*. See also O'Dwyer, *The Architecture of Deane and Woodward*, 293, who also agrees with this reading.
44 Kane, 'John Henry Newman's Catholic University Church in Dublin', 119; Kane, 'John Henry Newman's Catholic University Church revisited'.
45 Comparable nineteenth-century concepts do surface occasionally, such as the use of 'Byzantine-Roman' (byzantinisch-römisch) by Sulpiz Boisserée in his attempt to describe the compound origins of the Romanesque style in a lecture delivered at the École des Beaux Arts, Paris, on 13 September 1823, published as Boisserée, 'Über die sogenannte gotische Baukunst', esp. 398.

discussed as one of the earliest stirrings of Byzantine revival architecture in the British Isles which first emerges in ambiguous basilican iterations.

An informed response to Byzantine architectural forms developed slowly as travel to the former regions of the empire and academic publications increased through the century.[46] Even as knowledge and exposure increased, a close emulation of Byzantine forms and spatiality emerged only occasionally in western European architecture in comparison to regions in eastern Europe and Russia where historical identification with the Byzantine Empire and Orthodoxy was felt. The impetus behind Byzantine revival architecture in the British Isles also differed from that of the Gothic revival movement which aimed at a closer reproduction of historical styles, in its early stages at least, guided by more clearly articulated ideological and doctrinal motivations. In western Europe, the Byzantine revival style of architecture was often chosen as an alternative to mainstream architectural traditions on account of both economic considerations and symbolically to express something different to the norm, which also reflects why and how it was incorporated at University Church.

Newman and Pollen were not using the style to convey a connection to the historical entity of the Byzantine Empire. Indeed, Newman saw the Byzantines like most other writers of his era in the British Isles, as 'a fanatical people, who had for ages set themselves against the Holy See and the Latin world, and who had for centuries been, under a sentence of excommunication', a people of 'a cowardly, crafty, insincere, and fickle character of mind, for which they had been notorious from time immemorial'.[47] However, the early architectural writers who were most appreciative of Byzantine architecture separated the built tradition from the widely perceived increasing degeneracy of the empire to a great extent. Clearly influenced by earlier architectural histories but outlining his own innovative argument, Pollen charts a very clear conception of the basilica in his lectures and writings as an inherently early Christian architectural type that originated in Rome but reached perfection in Byzantine

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46 On the nature and diversity of Byzantine architecture itself, see Ousterhout, *Eastern Medieval Architecture*.

47 Newman, *History of the Turks*, 136. These writings were based on a series of lectures delivered in the Catholic Institute of Liverpool during October 1853. Newman's stance on the Orthodox world is complicated, however. In the preface to the publication, for example, he suggests in relation to the present state of the East and tensions with Russia over the declining Ottoman Empire, that while there would have been no Turks in Constantinople had the Byzantines listened to the Pope, that the British should now probably wish 'Godspeed' to the Russians as a Christian power trying to oust the Ottoman Turks, while simultaneously emphasising that he was of course a clergyman rather than a politician.

buildings, with the basilicas of Ravenna being held up as superior to those of Rome.

In his discussion of the structural characteristics of the basilica, Pollen says: 'The same spirit seems to have reigned over the architecture of these first eight or nine centuries of our era, and basilicas, whether Byzantine or Roman were of a common origin – the monuments of the old Empire'.[48] For Pollen, the basilican type did not progress in Rome, where at the end of the pagan Roman Empire 'artistic design was undoubtedly at its lowest'. He focuses instead on the 'grandeur' of the sixth-century basilicas in Ravenna as leading the way in terms of the basilican type and its decoration, through which Christianity 'inaugurated the revival of the arts'.[49] Pollen, who had travelled to Constantinople and was deeply impressed by his time there, did not stop at the shores of the Adriatic like John Ruskin (1819–1900) – the most famous English advocate of Byzantine architecture in the nineteenth century. In the East, according to Pollen, 'the emperor achieved greater wonders even than in Ravenna'.[50] For Pollen, Byzantine basilicas, particularly those of the early centuries, excelled in colour and ornament, and it is in these aspects of University Church that the Byzantinism of the style is most observed.

For Pollen, as for Newman, the 'serious and imposing style of architecture' perfected in the basilican tradition spoke to the history of Christianity's triumph as a newly imperial religion, when the Church transitioned from being a persecuted minority worshipping in private houses to large new buildings.[51] The basilica as a once pagan building type transformed and made splendid for Christian purposes was a transitional form *par excellence*. Indeed, Newman's friend Fr William Neville, who edited his Dublin papers, described the style and decorations of the Dublin church as being the outcome of Newman's suggestions, with 'the ancient Churches of Rome serving him as his model, both from his liking them, and from their historical associations'.[52] To express the essence of Ireland's unprecedented Catholic university, Newman and Pollen created a church that generated an analogy with the triumph of the early Christian church, and they did so through drawing ultimately upon the Roman and Byzantine basilicas of Italy, as Pollen developed upon Newman's wishes. Here the style formed part of an evocation of early

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48   Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 131.

49   Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 141.

50   Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 137.

51   Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 129, 131.

52   Newman, *My Campaign* I, n. 9.

Christianity and, through this, University Church contributed to the first stirrings of Byzantine revivalism in western Europe as it emerged in the mid-century by means of basilican architectural styles.

Newman and analogy

Analogies between the Church of the present and the Church of the past are found throughout Newman's substantial corpus of writings, and such analogies played a significant role in relation to his ecclesiology as it evolved over the course of his life. Indeed, analogies that Newman began to perceive between the Via Media of the Anglican Church – the posited middle road between Roman Catholicism and the reformed tradition – and heretical movements within early Christianity played a seminal role in his conversion. In his later intellectual and theological autobiography, the *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, Newman recounts the 'three blows that broke him' in 1841 with regard to his faltering Protestant faith, one of which was his realisation, through the study he was undertaking that summer on Arian history, that the 'pure Arians were the Protestants, the semi-Arians were the Anglicans, and that Rome now was what it was then. The truth lay not with the Via Media …'.[53] This compounded his earlier conviction based on a similar analogy that he had perceived between the Oriental Monophysites and the Via Media during his work of 1839, which had planted the seeds of doubt in his heart. His realisation that the Church of Rome, despite its many faults, had continued as the bastion of truth throughout history against schismatic minorities contributed towards his decision to convert:

> … in the middle of the fifth century, I found, as it seemed to me, Christendom of the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries reflected. I saw my face in that mirror, and I was a Monophysite. The Church of the Via Media was in the position of the Oriental communion, Rome was, where she now is …[54]

Newman perceived a series of reoccurring heretical types across Christian history that opposed the established Church: 'That ancient history is not dead, it lives … we see ourselves in it, as in a glass, and

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53 Newman, *Apologia*, 235. Ian Ker picks up on the use of analogy throughout Newman's writings in his authoritative biography of Newman. See Ker, *John Henry Newman*, 231, 240, 343, 351–3, 368, 420.
54 Newman, *Apologia*, 210–11.

if the Via Media was heretical then, it is heretical now'.[55] Newman's biographer Ian Ker argues that the argument from analogy continued to play a 'crucial role in his critique of Anglo-Catholicism'.[56] Newman was keenly aware of the widespread analogical use of the early Church by Protestants in the other direction, saying that 'students of the Fathers … begin by assuming that the body to which they belong is that of which they read in times past, and then proceed to decorate it with that majesty and beauty of which history tells, or which their genius creates'.[57] Newman had once proceeded in the same way for his own Protestant community, but his conversion was precipitated by the belief that the present Catholic Church had developed continuously from the ancient Church. He continued to compare by means of analogy the situation of the present Catholic Church in the British Isles to the challenges faced by Catholics in the past on account of heresy and unbelief, and his church formed a physical manifestation of precisely this.

In his famous sermon, 'The Second Spring', preached in celebration of the 'Restoration of Hierarchy' in England – the reestablishment of the Catholic diocesan structure in 1850 following its dissolution at the Reformation – Newman compared Catholics and their survival in post-Reformation England to the early persecuted Church, saying they had survived 'in corners, and alleys, and cellars and the housetops, or in the recesses of the country; cut off from the populous world around them, and dimly seen, as if through a mist or in twilight, as ghosts flitting to and fro, by the high Protestants, the lords of the earth'.[58] He went on to herald the restoration of the Catholic Church in England, albeit with the reservation and caution he had accrued over the years in his struggles.[59] Before he was beset with difficulties in Dublin, Newman harboured a comparable optimism concerning what might be achieved for Catholics by means of the university, and his church was a crucial part of the expression and achievement of his vision. University Church was the physical outworking of his critique of both the Protestant hierarchy and secularism, conveying the identity and indeed the rich and multifaceted 'Idea' of the university as a whole by means of analogy.

In 1855, when the planning of University Church was in full swing, Newman wrote *Callista: A tale of the third century*, first published anonymously in 1856, which was underpinned by an implicit analogy

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55   Newman, *Certain Difficulties* I, 379.
56   Ker, *John Henry Newman*, 353.
57   Newman, *Certain Difficulties* I, 4–5.
58   Newman, *Sermons Preached*, 172–3.
59   Newman, *Sermons Preached*, 179–80.

between the early Christians and Catholics in nineteenth-century England, which was dominated by Protestantism. Ker points out that much of the novel's interest comes from this analogous connection whereby 'in both cases an esoteric faith found itself in involuntary collision with the established religion of an imperial power'.[60] It is clear that Catholic emancipation and restoration occupied Newman's mind in the 1850s while he was building University Church, as the Catholic Church hierarchy reestablished itself and his hopes for what might be achieved through the education of Catholics burgeoned. In later years, Newman pointed to the theological significance of this novel which he felt had not been taken fully on board by Catholics.[61] It seems that a comparable analogy was present in his creative work in both *Callista* and at University Church.

A summary of the chapters which follow

The basilican structure of the church with its Roman and Byzantine features is discussed in Chapter 2 as an architectural appeal to the early Church which responded to and challenged both the hegemonic Protestant socio-political hierarchy of the British Isles and post-Enlightenment secularism. Newman perceived these two things as connected through their disdain for the medieval church, by means of which the current Church of Rome traced its continued authority back to early Christian times. His church inherently contested both through its form. Newman and Pollen's pioneering design is placed within the wider context of the perceived relationship between Roman basilicas and the Byzantine tradition in early architectural histories, the reception of Byzantium in nineteenth-century Britain, Victorian racial understandings of architectural styles and the earliest basilican revivalist architectures in Europe. It is only through carefully situating its historicist style within the complex intellectual and aesthetic climate from which it evolved, that the Dublin church can be fully understood.

Limitations of site and funds made the Romano-Byzantine structure favourable, but an analysis of the building against the backdrop of Pollen's Dublin lecture series and his writing on the basilica makes clear that the forms were also carefully selected to chart continuity back to Rome and the early Church. The architectural act of using Roman and

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60 Ker, *John Henry Newman*, 420.
61 *Letters and Diaries* 26, 130.

Byzantine forms as an expression of early medieval Christianity, and the attendant ideas concerning the triumph of the Church and its continued authority through history, are discussed as a response to the pervasive influence of key Enlightenment figure Edward Gibbon (1737–1794) and his deprecation of the early medieval church, particularly as these ideas were received and reworked in the writings of Protestant scholars who repudiated the continued authority of the Roman Catholic Church. The Romano-Byzantine structure is seen as having been chosen not only to create an analogy with the triumph of the early Church but to express the sacred continuity and development of the Catholic Church over the centuries, which served to explain and justify the mission of the university in turning out educated Catholic men to take their rightful positions in society under the authority of Rome.

Chapter 3 moves from the overall form of the church to its internal decoration, focussing in greater detail on the origin and meaning of its constituent forms, such as its Byzantinising capitals and stilted arches. Pollen's creation of a 'beautiful and imposing whole' for Newman through what influential architectural writer John Ruskin termed the Byzantine aesthetic of 'incrustation' is considered at length, with a particular focus on the Irish 'marbles' that were a determining factor in the choice of the basilican structure. The affectivity of the harmonious and sumptuous polychrome of the church's decoration, which created a colourful analogy that connected the Dublin church to the early Christian church, is discussed against the backdrop of Victorian perceptions of colour, symbolism and affect in architecture. It is also considered in relation to Pollen's travels in Italy and the formerly Byzantine East, his appreciation of the writings of Ruskin on the churches of the Veneto and the influence of the nearby Museum Building, which was being built in a round-arched revival style at Trinity College Dublin. The visual analogy is discussed as a poetic and persuasive expression of Newman's desire that subjugated Catholic young men across the British Isles would find their rightful place in society as they were educated intellectually, spiritually and morally, just as the early Christians had found their way and triumphed in their heathen context.

Chapter 4 situates the Romano-Byzantine form of the church within the wider context of nineteenth-century historicist architectures in Great Britain and Ireland, illuminating in greater detail why this revivalist expression was deemed most suitable in Dublin. The histories of the Victorian Gothic, Romanesque and Byzantine revival movements are sketched and compared, and the earlier success of the Byzantine style in relatively inconspicuous secular projects where eclecticism and

polychromy were more readily accepted, rather than in ecclesiastical design, is discussed. A consideration of the earlier Church of St Mary and St Nicholas, erected in the Gothic revival style for Newman by architect Henry Underwood in Littlemore, Oxford, between 1835–6, is used to highlight Newman's pragmatic and contextual approach to ecclesiastical buildings as well as his appreciation of the symbolic and affective purposes of architecture.

Newman's esteem for classical and medieval styles, once kept in their place and adapted to serving the liturgical needs of the Church, and his awareness that his building endeavours would be 'read' according to both doctrinal matters and issues of nationalism are charted, as well as his remarkably consistent conviction that architecture should respond to its context and the needs of the present. In this case, the needs were those of Catholics in the British Isles who had been denied their rightful opportunities in education and social placement. Appeals to the past were always in service of the present for Newman, and University Church is discussed as an inevitable embodiment of Newman's accretive understanding of doctrine, through which he came to accept the Catholic Church as the preserver of the truths of Christianity which evolved under its care. His Dublin church, as the perfect preservation and evolution of the basilican type, can be read as an expression of the continuity of the apostolic Catholic Church to the present day and thus the authority behind his venture to restore Catholics to their rightful societal position.

Nowhere is the connection between the fabric of the church and the mission of the university clearer than in the pseudo-mosaic that Pollen painted in the conch of the apse above the altar. Chapter 5 charts the meaning and later revival of mosaic as a medium in the British Isles and brings together the arguments of the previous chapters with a focus on this centrepiece of the church's programme and how it very clearly and effectively outlined the breadth of Newman's vision for university education for Catholics. Pollen's painting of the Virgin, labelled as the Seat of Wisdom, is discussed as an expression of Newman's philosophy of education, particularly his advocacy of curriculum wholeness and the pastoral and moral responsibility of the university as the *alma mater* who, supported by the Church, would send students – well-equipped with the perfect union of science and religion – out into the world as future leaders through the authority of papal Rome.

The final chapter looks ahead and charts in greater detail the development of Byzantine revival ecclesiastical architecture in the British Isles and argues for the precociousness and significance of

Newman and Pollen's contribution. John Francis Bentley's Westminster Cathedral (1895–1903), the seat of the Roman Catholic Archbishop, has been widely characterised as the most well-known and epitomic Byzantine revival building in England, but Newman and Pollen had developed a meaningful Romano-Byzantine basilica half a century earlier in Dublin that needs to be connected to it. A comparison of the Westminster and Dublin churches demonstrates certain affinities of approach tied to financial limitations and the reassertion of Catholic identity in the British Isles. The liminality and ambiguity of the Romano-Byzantine as signifier is argued to have made it possible to declare a new future for Catholics across the British Isles within the specific historical context in Dublin. In the use of its Romano-Byzantine style to declare new directions for the present and in the material and aesthetic principles of its design, the church is considered as an early expression of concepts that grew out of the work of Ruskin, and other mid-century writers, which came into their own at the end of the century in the Arts and Crafts movement.

In retrospect, Newman himself considered his achievements in Dublin to have been University Church, the founding of the *Catholic University Gazette* and the acquisition of Medical School House in Cecilia Street.[62] It has been difficult to move away from the depiction of Newman's time in Ireland as a failure following his own later opinions on the venture and its characterisation as such in the three chapters devoted to it in the first biography of Newman by Wilfrid Ward in 1912.[63] Newman's difficulties with the complexities of the Irish political and ecclesiastical landscape and his frequent absences from Dublin to oversee to his Birmingham oratory are well documented, among other issues, and they need no rehearsal here. The objective of this book is to focus on a hitherto underappreciated success from his time in Dublin, demonstrating how this church not only expressed and embodied Newman's 'Idea' of a Catholic university but also formed an important Romano-Byzantine expression within the wider revivalism that was taking place across the British Isles and beyond. Far from being an obscure design related purely to the aesthetic preferences of Newman, this book seeks to resituate the church as a significant response to the intellectual and aesthetic context within

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62 Newman, *My Campaign* I, 290–304. Although the university opened with a faculty of letters, or liberal arts, the Cecilia-Street Medical School, purchased only one year after the Catholic university was founded, was immediately successful and has continued to this day as part of University College Dublin.

63 Ward, *Life of John Henry Newman*, 305–416.

which it was built. The church – which was eventually purchased from Newman by the Catholic University of Ireland in 1864 and is now a vibrant parish church at the centre of Dublin – was intended to herald a renewed identity and social position for Catholics in the British Isles through stressing not only continuity from, but also analogy with, the early Church.

2
The basilican design and the continuity of the Church

> It covered the garden in rear of the University House; a plain brick hall with an absidal end, timber ceiling etc. somewhat in the manner of the earlier Roman basilicas. He [Newman] felt a strong attachment to those ancient churches with rude exteriors but solemn and impressive within, *recalling the early history of the Church, as it gradually felt its way in the converted Empire, and took possession*.[1]

Writing later in 1890, John Hungerford Pollen articulated succinctly how the architectural form of the Dublin church expressed the essence of Newman's vision for the university. The staff and students at the nascent Catholic university operated not only in the face of a hegemonic Protestant socio-political hierarchy, but also within a post-Enlightenment intellectual climate grappling with secularism.[2] In a memorandum written by Newman for Archbishop Cullen to use at the synodal meeting of April 1854, Newman stated directly that one of the central objectives of the university was to 'provide a series of sound and philosophical defences of Catholicity and Revelation, in answer to the infidel tenets and arguments, which

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1   J. H. Pollen, published in *The Month* (September 1906), 319. Emphasis my own.
2   For an interpretation and critique of 'the Enlightenment' as a complex and problematic term, see Peters, 'The enlightenment'. For the traditional secularisation thesis pertaining to the nineteenth century, see, selectively, Chadwick, *The Secularization*; Gilbert, *The Making of Post-Christian Britain*; Abrams, *Natural Supernaturalism*; Willey, *More Nineteenth-Century Studies*. For its recent critique, see Larsen, *Crisis of Doubt*; Nash, 'Reassessing'; Turner, 'Christian sources'; Rectenwald, *Nineteenth-Century British Secularism*, esp. 1–15. In relation to nineteenth-century Romanticism, see the work of Colin Jager, particularly *Unquiet Things*.

threaten us at this time'.[3] The architecture and its decoration spoke to both Protestantism and secularism through an appeal to Rome and the traditions of the early Church, which successfully overcame the analogous pagan majority context within which it was born. The creation of a 'beautiful and imposing' edifice that channelled the early Church to meet the needs of a modern university expressed Newman's vision for the university, which would embody the perfect union of religion and science, and which would devote itself holistically to the intellectual formation of each student, turning out erudite Catholic men who could take up societal roles hitherto denied to them.

Practical determinants and the design of the church

University Church is 120 ft long, 36 ft wide and 40 ft high (36.5 × 10.7 × 12.5 m) with a narrow rectangular floor plan determined by the shape of the garden in which it was built.[4] The design is that of an aisleless basilica, and Pollen explained the practical reasons for the employment of the type over the popular Gothic alternative in his 'Apologia' – the final instalment of his undergraduate lecture series on the development of the basilica, which he delivered in Dublin in 1855, while he was designing the church:

> The Basilicas exhibit a system of internal architecture; now this decoration is less costly, and far easier, than that of exteriors; and if the one only can be effected, more consonant to the Christian spirit; for there was this striking point of contrast between temples of the old worship and the houses of the new; here the worshippers themselves entered, and heard and saw the mysteries within … I have no wish to undervalue Gothic, the loftiest production of design in the modern world; but Gothic in its true home is mostly external in its beauty … to make Gothic grand with small means is a problem which I do not think modern artists have solved.[5]

3   Newman, 'Memorandum on the Objects of the University and the Means for attaining them, April 29, 1854', *Letters and Diaries* 16, 557.
4   The lady chapel was added later in 1875 as a gift from Mr Justice William O'Brien (1832–1899).
5   Pollen, 'Lecture VI', 378–9.

Pollen makes clear that the basilican design was determined by the limitations of the site, the unavailability of specialised craftsmen and, most importantly, financial constraints.[6] He opens by acknowledging that his own humble attempt to erect a basilica in Dublin was with 'poor resources and small command of skill'.[7] An architectural system that prioritised the interior over the exterior was chosen in part because it was less expensive and easier to execute without specialist craftsmen than the alternative of a Gothic revival church (the most prevalent style for Victorian ecclesiastical architecture, which was not achievable within the means at their disposal). Cullen had grave concerns regarding Newman's decision to finance the project personally, and indeed the project greatly exceeded its projected budget of £3,500, at almost £5,600.[8] The great anxiety that this caused Newman is palpable in his personal correspondence. Despite Newman's concerns, there were several reasons why he insisted on taking the financial burden upon himself, including expediency and the desire that it might one day become an Oratory of Philip Neri.[9] Newman was also clear in his letters that he wished to be left to his own devices regarding the aesthetic of the church, particularly its structure and decoration, and that financing the project personally would facilitate this.[10] Practical considerations were key to the choice of style, but symbolic ones were equally important.

The site was no less determinative. The church exterior was mostly obscured behind 87 St Stephen's Green so there was little point prioritising its exterior with the sculptural Gothic style (Figure 2.1). Pollen further justified the basilica, as an interior form of architecture, as being more 'consonant to the Christian spirit', given that pagan temples were primarily an architecture of the exterior with only a small internal *cella* required to house the cult statue and votives – an architectural type rejected for the congregational basilica by early Christians, who needed space to gather inside to celebrate the liturgy.[11] The congregational

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6   Newman's personal correspondence corroborates the role played by the lack of funds in the design. See *Letters and Diaries* 16, 482.
7   Pollen, 'Lecture VI', 378.
8   Newman hoped that church revenue could be used to repay him over a period of 20 years, a period that exceeded the building's initial lease. See McGrath, *Newman's University*, 409.
9   Newman, *My Campaign* I, 291; *Letters and Diaries* 16, 482.
10   In a letter to James Hope-Scott on 20 July 1855, Newman explained, 'I do not use University money for several reasons … I wish to have my own way as to site, building, decoration etc.' *Letters and Diaries* 16, 510–11. See also, Newman, *My Campaign* I, 291. He also discusses his desire that it might one day become an Oratory church in letters to various individuals. See, for example, the letter on 29 July 1856 to Thomas MacNamara. *Letters and Diaries* 17, 338.
11   In this Pollen was drawing on the thought of earlier theorists who had positively evaluated the early Christian basilica, namely Thomas Hope, *An Historical Essay* I, 86.

Figure 2.1   University Church, Dublin, 1855–6. The façade of the building from the street. © Niamh Bhalla

basilica maximised the narrow site available to provide Newman with the large utilitarian space, or 'barn' as Newman also described it, that he required.[12] The undivided space allowed the Eucharist and university ceremony to be observed without impediment, and its wooden roof provided clear acoustics for preaching and music, both of which Newman prioritised within the performance of the liturgy.[13] Pollen thus outlined in his lecture many of the practical concerns that determined the design without precluding larger ideological and aesthetic considerations.

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12 Newman, *My Campaign* I, 294. The description of the church in the Catholic University church indicated that the rector desired 'to build as large a church as the ground would admit', see 'Architectural description of the University Church', 57. In the preface to the first volume of *Atlantis*, 1858, vi, the journal of science and literature published by the Catholic University of Ireland, it was claimed that it could host between 900 and 1,000 persons, and that it was used for the university high mass and sermon, the Senate, the distribution of prizes, theological disputes and other formal university acts. It was also claimed that there was room remaining for 'the accommodation of strangers'.

13 The practical achievements of the 'auditory' churches of the eighteenth century – designed to prioritise the preached Word of God – were merged in this way with the new value placed on symbolism and affective aesthetics in the nineteenth century. For discussion of eighteenth-century auditory churches and further bibliography, see Whyte, *Unlocking the Church*, 41.

Concluding his series on Roman and Byzantine basilicas with his Dublin church reveals, in and of itself, that the design was conceived with respect to the evolutionary continuum of great basilicas that preceded it, a building type which, according to Pollen, remained unsurpassed in terms of 'impressive effect, capacity and convenience'.[14]

The basilica

The basilica had been discussed in some of the earliest English writings on architectural history – particularly those by Thomas Hope (1769–1831) and Edward A. Freeman (1823–1892) – as an architectural type that embodied the rise and triumph of Christianity since Emperor Constantine (c. 280–337) first began converting these pagan civic buildings to Christian usage following the Edict of Milan (313).[15] Freeman in his *History of Architecture* (1849) – the influential first history of architecture published in English – develops this concept most fully, saying that the appropriation of this imperial building type for Christian use embodied the fundamental shift that had occurred with the rise of Christianity, which did not merely amount to the displacement of one religion by another, but rather the triumph of religion over all spheres of life. For Freeman, the basilica spoke to the seating of God:

> … on the throne of this world's power, the judgement-seat of Caesar, that became the shrine of His worship. There, in the very tribune where the proud heathen had so often sat to deliver over the patient martyr to the sword or to the lions, was upreared the altar where the holy gifts were offered.

According to Freeman, the basilica had an immediacy of message: 'The mention of these buildings at once brings before us the first triumphs of our religion, the days when the powers of the world first bowed before the Cross.'[16] Its structural parts were a tangible manifestation of 'the spoils' of Christianity's enemies, from the 'splendours of her long-drawn

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The openness of the design also allowed the Eucharistic ritual to be viewed without impediment. On Pugin and the rood screen controversy in this regard, see Pugin, *The Present State*, 78, and *A Treatise on the Chancel Screen*. For further discussion, see Lepine, 'Theology and threshold'.

14 Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 131.
15 Hope, *An Historical Essay* I, 86.
16 Freeman, *A History*, 152.

nave' to 'the mighty apse'.[17] The motivation behind Newman's choice of the basilica resonates clearly with the meaning attributed to them in some of the first English architectural histories of the nineteenth century.

Many writers distinguished between the basilican and Byzantine traditions – the latter differentiated chiefly by means of the dome – but attributed a generative role for both traditions in the development of later medieval styles of architecture in Europe. Freeman perceived the basilican and Byzantine traditions as two important starting points from which 'almost all subsequent forms may be derived; their influence runs in two streams, sometimes remaining parallel and distinct, sometimes converging and commingling', with their profitable commingling resulting in some of the most successful medieval buildings of Italy and Germany.[18] There were many cases in which the two converged, however, as Freeman observes, particularly in the basilicas of Byzantine Ravenna that deeply influenced University Church. Despite the distinction between the two building traditions found in such histories, which increased as time went on with greater exposure to Byzantine buildings in Greece, in particular, the basilican and the Byzantine were not so easily disentangled in practice. This was reflected in the fact that the nineteenth-century revivals of these styles emerged symbiotically, as they did at University Church.

On account of perceived convergences and shared forms, there also existed tendencies to confuse basilican, Byzantine and Romanesque styles of architecture, particularly in the first half of the nineteenth century, and to conflate them as forming part of one homogenous round-arched, pre-Gothic 'early Christian' style. At the time that Newman and Pollen were building, there was still some uncertainty surrounding the relevant nomenclature to denote the post-classical styles that dominated Christian architecture prior to 1200, all of which employed the round arch as their primary structural element. 'Byzantine' was often used in a particularly indistinct manner because of a lack of exposure to Byzantine buildings in comparison to those built in the European Romanesque style, and also due to the lack of clarity on whether it was a term denoting a political or religious affiliation or a strictly stylistic category.[19]

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17 Freeman, *A History*, 154.
18 Freeman, *A History*, 154.
19 This confusion persists even now. On the difficulties of Byzantine as a term, with further bibliography, see Marciniak and Smythe, *The Reception of Byzantium*, ch. 1. For good summaries on the reception of Byzantium, see also Cameron, 'The use and abuse', 3–31; *Byzantine Matters*.

Indeed, the architectural historian James Fergusson (1808–1886), in his illustrated history of architecture, published around the time that the Dublin church was being built, decried the fact that 'the term Byzantine has been so indiscriminately and so incorrectly applied to styles invented by people who hardly know the name of Byzantium, and to forms of art which have not the slightest affinity with those practiced in the capital, that it is now difficult to confine it within its true and only signification'.[20] Fergusson emphatically differentiated between basilicas and the Byzantine tradition, but he included the churches of Ravenna and Venice within the former category, which he confusingly terms the 'Romanesque'. Fergusson ran into further difficulties separating the basilican and Byzantine traditions when confronted with buildings like the seventh-century basilica of Hagios Demetrios in Thessaloniki, Greece, having ultimately to admit that 'the limits between the two styles are so imperfectly defined that we must wait for further information between attempting to make a classification'.[21]

Pollen charted clearly in his Dublin lectures and a later journal article based on them, however, a clear conception of the continuity of structure and form between Roman basilicas and the Byzantine tradition. He articulated the development of the basilica as starting in Rome and reaching new heights in Byzantine Ravenna, in buildings like San Vitale; reaching its most sumptuous at Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, and its most polished at San Marco in Venice.[22] For Pollen, these Byzantine structures were a logical development of the Roman basilica, belonging to a continuum in early Christian architecture, and he saw his Dublin church as part of this tradition. Pollen lingers on these crucial Byzantine buildings, which he had experienced on his earlier travels; and although Newman and Pollen opted for a simple basilica rather than a domed building, they were formative in relation to Pollen's design and decoration of the Dublin church.

Pollen was aware of the potential criticisms of his inclusion of both the 'basilica proper' (the oblong building divided into three or more naves) and more centralised domed churches under one category. Indeed, a positively scathing review of Pollen's article on the structural characteristics of the basilica which reflected the opinions of his earlier lectures was published in *The Ecclesiologist* in 1858. The reviewer refuted Pollen's evolutionary trajectory and claimed his thoughts lacked both

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20 Fergusson, *The Illustrated Handbook* II, 943.
21 Fergusson, *The Illustrated Handbook* II, 958.
22 Pollen, 'Structural characteristics'. The impact that Constantinople had on him is particularly evident in his writings. For further discussion, see Pollen, *John Hungerford Pollen*, 73.

'originality and accuracy', citing his decision to include both oblong basilican buildings and circular domed buildings as arbitrary and unreasonable.[23] Interestingly, Pollen's future father-in-law, Charles La Primaudaye, in recommending Pollen in 1854, gave quite an honest appraisal, saying:

> … in acquaintance with the rules and history of Art, such as would be required in one called upon to teach in such a place as your University, he is yet quite deficient. But … I think he could profitably apply himself with success to the acquirement of what is needed.[24]

Pollen's decision to amalgamate two traditions usually separated to a greater or lesser extent by architectural historians does not seem to have related to inexperience, however: he does not cite his sources, but he appears conversant with wider writings on these traditions, and he self-consciously charts his own innovative argument.

Pollen was quite clear of his position. He countered anticipated criticisms of his resolve to include 'a class of buildings not always so named' under the heading of the basilica with the assertion that the principles and spirit shared by the buildings under his consideration merited his decision to trace this connection between the Roman and Byzantine iterations of the most serious and imposing tradition of architecture, which defined the first eight or nine centuries of Christianity.[25] Newman would of course have been familiar with Pollen's convictions in this regard: it is hard to imagine that Pollen did not discuss the topics of his lectures with Newman as he was writing them.[26] Moreover, Pollen's thoughts on the structural characteristics of Roman and Byzantine basilicas appeared as an article in 1858, in the inaugural issue of *Atlantis*, the journal of science and literature published by the Catholic University of Ireland.

Pollen's design for Newman – which embodied this model of continuity between Roman and Byzantine basilican structures as part of the 'early Christian' tradition – was particularly influenced by Ruskin, whose influence is evident in Pollen's article. Ruskin summed up the

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23 'The "Atlantis"', *The Ecclesiologist*, 103–5.
24 *Letters and Diaries* 16, 301.
25 Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 129–31.
26 Newman was already in his correspondence with Pollen's future father-in-law discussing what Pollen might put in his lectures before he was even appointed. *Letters and Diaries* 16, 301.

continuity and shared features of the two styles in a manner similar to Pollen's conception:

> The Christian Roman and Byzantine work is round-arched, with single and well-proportioned shafts; capitals imitated from classical Roman; mouldings more or less so; and large surfaces of walls entirely covered with imagery, mosaic and paintings, which of scripture history or sacred symbols.[27]

Aside from Newman's instruction and Ruskin's influence, it will become clear that the design was also shaped by Pollen's first-hand experiences of churches in Italy and Constantinople and the modern Rundbogenstil (round-arched style) buildings that both he and Newman had visited in Munich, some of which similarly combined the basilican and Byzantine traditions.[28] Both the clear continuity that Pollen charted between Roman and Byzantine architecture and the informed nature of his 'early Christian' design were exceptional at this date, particularly in the face of the Victorian theories of race that informed architectural design and criticism in the mid-nineteenth century.[29] Although Newman and Pollen's writings are essential to charting the conception behind University Church, the wider context is also crucial to understanding not only the perspectives espoused in their writings but also the significance of the building.

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27 Ruskin, *The Works of John Ruskin* (hereafter *Works*) 9, 39.
28 The connection between Pollen's design and his visit to the Rundbogenstil buildings in Munich was first made by Constantine Curran. See Curran, *Newman House*, 224. This was built upon in McCarthy, 'University Church'. Eileen Kane disagrees with this reading, saying that the similarity stems from the emulation of the Ravennate basilicas and that this source of inspiration cannot be traced in Newman or Pollen's writings. I agree with Kane that both University Church and some of the Rundbogenstil buildings visited by Newman and Pollen were similarly inspired by Ravennate churches, but the visits of both Newman and Pollen there and their appreciation of these buildings recorded in their writings, the undeniable similarity of University Church to St Boniface in Munich in particular and the general combination of an early Christian basilica with Byzantine elements and Nazarene paintings as an expression of the revitalisation of Catholicism in the face of increased secularism cannot be ignored. See Kane, 'John Henry Newman's Catholic University Church revisited', n. 17.
29 On the racial categories of reference that dominated Victorian discourse, more generally, see Burrow, 'The uses of philology'; Young, *Colonial Desire*, esp. 65–6; Koditschek, 'A Liberal descent?'; Bell, 'Alter orbis'. For a thorough discussion of how this related to architecture, and for further bibliography, see Crinson, *Empire Building*, part I, whose critical synthesis of this complex history I am indebted to in the following discussion.

The 'racial' perception of Byzantine architecture in Britain

The erection of a building in the nineteenth century was unavoidably connected to cultural and racial connotations, and Byzantine forms were difficult to place because of the tensions between Byzantium's identity as a medieval Christian empire that grew from its Roman predecessor, its location in the East and its subsequent association with Eastern Orthodoxy. Byzantine forms often fell somewhere between the 'Oriental' otherness of Islam and its architecture – characterised paradoxically in terms of both its perceived static abstraction and tendencies towards ill-disciplined extravagance – and the purely Christian style of Gothic, which grew out of nature and continued to be organic and generative in its forms and development.[30] Indeed, the Byzantine tradition was variously perceived as having influenced both of these traditions. Gothic, discussed in greater depth in Chapter 4, dominated the expression of Victorian architecture and was famously celebrated as inherently suitable for the Christian nations of 'the North' by Ruskin, as the true Christian form – 'the most perfect form which the art can assume' – by Freeman, and as the product of the true *Catholic* Church by Augustus Welby Pugin (1812–1852), the preeminent spokesperson for the Gothic revival movement before his premature death.[31]

Mark Crinson, in his seminal study of Orientalism and Victorian architecture, charts the burgeoning awareness of Islamic architecture between 1840–70 when a growing body of purportedly encyclopaedic works recorded the built environment in the East, under the impetus of imperialism and the 'new orientalism' that accompanied it.[32] The growing geographical scope of architectural consideration meant that Victorian theories of race increasingly informed the interpretation of

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30 John Ruskin, whose thought was determinative in relation to Byzantine architecture, was generally positive in his appraisal of Islamic architecture but shared his contemporaries' opinion that it easily lent itself to 'mindless luxury' and ill-discipline. Ruskin, *Works* 9, 15. Ruskin's terminology around race was at times inconsistent in this regard: sometimes he connected Byzantium to ancient Greece and Rome, but he also related it to the Orient, the oriental and the South. He at times arbitrarily conflated the Arabs and the Byzantines in *The Stones of Venice*. He seems later to have acknowledged the shortcomings of *The Stones* in this regard in the preface to its third edition, when he says he did not in the third part of the work, the part which he states is the only part read by his British audience to his consternation, dwell sufficiently 'upon the distinction between the Byzantine and Arab temper'. See *Works* 9, 15, 36, 41–2, & 282.

31 For Ruskin, both architectures and race grew from nature, and the Gothic style was connected to the jagged landscape of Northern Europe. Freeman, *A History*, 27; Pugin, *Contrasts*; *An Apology*; *The Present State*.

32 Crinson, *Empire Building*.

architecture, particularly in the work of theorists like Ruskin, Freeman, Fergusson and Owen Jones (1809–1874).[33] Growing out of comparative philology and ethnography, intrinsically comparative histories of architecture claimed the ability to delineate the cultural particularities of styles according to the properties unique to their respective races.[34] The British philologist Sir William Jones (1746–1794) had first used the term 'Aryan' as a linguistic label, but others such as historian Barthold Georg Niebuhr (1776–1831) applied it as a racial description that went beyond language to physical characteristics and more. Niebuhr drew upon the work of German philosopher Hegel to create a tense dichotomy between the Aryan ethnic group of northern and central Europe and the Oriental group of Eastern Europe. This was applied to architecture by figures like Freeman, who saw a Hegelian outworking in architecture of 'the character and position of nations', charting the ascent of Aryan culture from antiquity to the present and placing it in a fraught dialectic with the so-called Orient, conveying all the assumed inferiority of non-European cultures.[35]

Generally, a divide was created between the East and West, and Byzantium sat uncomfortably within this. For Ruskin, who instead used a South/North dichotomy, the southern 'savage' races produced an art of pure pleasure whereas the gentleness of northern people produced an architecture that grew out of nature. Although Ruskin never visited an Islamic country, Islamic architecture was foundational to his South/North (rather than the increasingly more normative East/West) divide that structured all his writings into poles of non-Christian and Christian.[36] Freeman perceived the 'whole history of the East' to be a 'barren catalogue' which could bear no comparison to the history of 'Greece, or Rome, or mediaeval Europe'. Nevertheless, he did include Islamic architecture in his history of architecture, which he said derived ultimately from Roman architecture and was 'enriched and

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33 See particularly the introduction to a later edition of Fergusson's *Illustrated Handbook of Architecture*, 2 vols. (1855), retitled *A History of Architecture in All Countries* (1865).

34 Fergusson, for example, described 'the four great building races: the Turanian, Semitic, Celtic and Aryan'. Crinson, *Empire Building*, 45. Others, such as Ruskin, saw that the correlation between race and architecture grew from geography, rather than language. This was developed particularly in Ruskin's early work 'The poetry of architecture' (1837–8), *Works* I, 1–189. All of this is charted and discussed comprehensively in Crinson, *Empire Building*.

35 Freeman, *A History*, 7. On Freeman in this regard, see also Bremner and Conlin, 'History as form'. Freeman's racial theory influenced other writers such as George Gilbert Scott who saw Gothic as the architecture of nations of Germanic origin, 'in whose hands the civilisation of the modern world has been vested'. Scott, 'Lecture I', 17. Cited and discussed in Bremner, *Imperial Gothic*, 201.

36 On the reorientation of the division of Europe from north/south to west/east because of the Enlightenment, see Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, 1994.

magnificent', but ultimately devoid of the principle of life that was found in western medieval architecture.[37] For Freeman, Islamic architecture was ultimately 'of very little artistic value' because its 'richness and gorgeousness' was 'mere barbaric magnificence superadded to fantastic and inconsistent forms'.[38]

James Fergusson, who was more gracious in his appraisal of Islamic architecture, did attribute creativity and invention to architectures of the East but also perceived tendencies towards overindulgence in invention without discipline, resulting in a similar irrationality and a lack of order – the antithesis of the Greek and the Gothic.[39] The architectural theory in these histories, wherein the outputs of various cultures were compared according to a dichotomy between traditions as either developing, progressive and creative, or static, uncreative and lifeless – aligned to Gothic and Arab/Semite architectures, respectively – had been greatly influenced by Newman's theory of accretive development in theology, discussed further in Chapter 4.[40]

The quandary of where to place Byzantine architecture in terms of these racial understandings of architectural forms and the Aryan/Oriental divide was exacerbated by the so-called Eastern Question that dominated the first half of the nineteenth century in Europe as a result of the gradual demise of the Ottoman Empire and related conflicts, particularly the Greek War of Independence (1821–32) and the Crimean War (1853–6).[41] Byzantium held an ambiguous position in straddling the East and West, and these tensions threw this further into relief. Many of its seminal monuments, although Christian, were still under Ottoman rule, and the style of its architecture also held associations with Russian culture at a time of increased tension caused by the Crimean war. Indeed, all of the earliest histories that included Byzantine architecture charted precisely the development of both Islamic and Russian architecture from the Byzantine tradition.[42] Drawing on such histories, an article in June 1852 in *The Builder* – the foremost English architectural and building journal of the nineteenth century – asserted, for example, that 'Mohammedan and Moorish architecture grew out of that of Byzantium; so also the architecture of Russia', while also acknowledging its influence

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37 Freeman, *A History*, 263.
38 Freeman, *A History*, 18, 263.
39 See Crinson, *Empire Building*, 42–8.
40 Brownlee, 'The first High Victorians'; Crinson, *Empire Building*, 40, 86, 140.
41 For a clear and accessible guide, see Macfie, *The Eastern Question*. See also Kelley, 'Past history and present politics'.
42 Lindsay, *Sketches* I, 245; Hope, *An Historical Essay* I, 155–9; Freeman, *A History*, 165.

on European architectural traditions.[43] Pollen similarly charted the debt of Islamic architecture to the Byzantine tradition, particularly to Hagia Sophia, but equally its influence on later medieval architecture in western Europe, saying the domed spatiality of Byzantine architecture and its 'complexity of curves' suggested:

> … a corresponding mystery, which the Orientals did not fail to dwell upon with inexhaustible delight, and to develop with a graceful, creative sense of beauty, which in its turn and at several epochs, reacted upon the west.[44]

In keeping with Victorian understandings of race, nation and the 'Spirit of the Age' determining art and architectural outputs – under the influence of German Idealism – Byzantium occupied a fraught position. It was Christian but incorporated many languages and people groups, it grew initially out of Rome but was located in the East, and was thus by definition 'non-Aryan'.[45] Freeman summarised these difficulties in defining Byzantium, choosing to demarcate Byzantine civilisation as a geographical entity: although it was Christian and closely connected to Europe, to Freeman it did not represent a 'single race or creed, but all who chance to fix their abode within a certain extensive portion of the globe'. It had a correspondingly vague identity that he termed 'an Oriental character', which became 'gradually stronger as its connection with Western Christendom was constantly weakened'.[46] It was the perceived non-Aryan stasis of its cultural outputs, which could not 'claim a place equal to those of western Europe', along with the widely perceived moral and political shortcomings of the empire, that caused Freeman and others in Britain to deprecate Byzantium. As disparaging as Freeman was in relation to Byzantium, however, he maintained an appreciation of its architecture which had 'a character both original and enduring, vigorous in intellectual conception and mechanical execution'. And he posited a generative role for it in the evolution of the architectural styles of western Europe, as well as those of Islamic regions and Russia.[47]

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43 'Letters to a lady, embodying a popular sketch of the history of architecture, and the characteristics of the various styles which have prevailed, no. X', *The Builder*, vol. 10 (19 June 1852), 389.
44 Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 133, 139.
45 For more on the *Geist der Zeiten* or 'spirit of the times', see Aston, *The Spirit of the Age*.
46 Freeman, *A History*, 164–5.
47 Freeman, *A History*, 167.

The racialised approaches to architecture which were used to differentiate the built traditions of the East and West (or South and North for Ruskin) were also highly gendered, with the irrational whimsy, lack of discipline and indulgence of feminine, Oriental and exotic Islamic architecture, compared with the pure, logical and masculine Christian architectures of the North/West. Colour was intricately implicated in such gendered characterisations and often came to be perceived as dubious by its associations with the Islamic/Oriental East. Along with their predominantly Eastern locations, the use of colour was a defining feature of Byzantine monuments which meant that Byzantine architecture was often associated more so with the Islamic East than the Christian West. Leading architectural theorist Alexander Beresford Hope (1820–1887) was pioneering in introducing colour – perceived as an 'Oriental' trait – to his design with William Butterfield (1814–1900) for All Saints' Church, Margaret Street (1849–59), and it was perceived as having a Byzantine character by some writers because of this.[48] Lamenting the lack of precision concerning the label Byzantine as applied to architectural traditions, Fergusson notes later in 1855, as knowledge was increasing concerning Byzantine buildings, its use for 'every form of architecture in which polychromy was adopted to any extent', while also acknowledging the importance of colour in relation to Byzantine buildings like Hagia Sophia wherein its magnificent effect was reliant 'almost wholly upon colour'.[49]

Response to Byzantium and its cultural outputs in western Europe was marked by ambiguity from its earliest stages: it was both Christian and Oriental, implicated in the inheritance of Christian Europe and Islam; its art and architecture exerting both fascination and repulsion in equal measure, and this was particularly the case in Britain.

Gibbon and the decline and fall of the Roman Empire

Britain was geographically distant from the former territories of Byzantium with no sense of historical identification with the empire. Furthermore, Byzantine esteem for the icon and the connection of the empire to Eastern Orthodoxy meant that it held less appeal than the Gothic within developing medievalism(s), on account of Protestant

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48 See, for example, the 'public improvements: churches and chapels' section of the *British Almanac* (1854), 239, which describes its polychromatic brickwork and use of colourful inlay as approaching 'the Byzantine character'.

49 Fergusson, *The Illustrated History* II, 943, 951.

sentiments. More than anything, however, the perception of Byzantium in Britain – epitomised in Freeman's assertion of Byzantium's trajectory of atrophy and stasis – had been determined by key Enlightenment thinker Edward Gibbon (1737–1794) and his scathing appraisal of the Eastern Roman Empire in *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, published between 1776–88.[50] In this seminal work, in which he famously described 'the triumph of barbarism and religion', Gibbon augmented the position of Enlightenment figures such as Montesquieu (1689–1755) who perceived 'the history of the Greek empire' as being 'nothing more than a tissue of revolts, seditions and perfidies' – an empire defined by 'bigotry', 'crude superstition' and a 'stupid passion for icons'.[51] Gibbon attributed much of the demise of the Roman Empire to the ascendance of Christianity and the attendant shift in priorities from matters of war and politics to interest in the fate of the soul and the afterlife.[52] He held particular disdain for the Greek, Christian half of the Roman Empire – later known as Byzantium – that continued in the East after the western half fell in 476. For Gibbon, the leaders of this Greek empire were a 'degenerate race of princes, who continued to assume the titles of Caesar and Augustus' in an empire defined by atrophy and misery, particularly after the seventh century, and one which was inextricably embroiled in despotism that was both Oriental and spiritual.[53]

Gibbon himself did not engage at any length with the art and architecture of Byzantium, only summarily describing how the 'eye of the spectator is disappointed by an irregular prospect' when viewing the half domes of the 'venerable pile' that was Hagia Sophia.[54] He also promoted the conflation of Byzantine and Islamic architecture on the basis that Hagia Sophia was imitated by the Ottoman establishment.[55] It was his general characterisation of the deficiency of Byzantium that was far reaching, however, permeating all manner of scholarship within and beyond Britain, including art history, such as Franz Kugler's *Handbook of the History of Painting* (1837), which appeared in English in 1841

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50 Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*; McKitterick and Quinault, *Edward Gibbon*; Roberts, *Edward Gibbon*; Womersley, *Religious Scepticism*; Womersley, *Edward Gibbon*. For a good overview and further bibliography, see O'Brien and Young, *The Cambridge Companion*. Of particular interest in relation to this book are the contributions of Mark Whittow and Tim Stuart-Buttle therein.

51 Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, §71. See also Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion* I, 1–10. Montesquieu, *Considerations on the Causes*, 188, 190, 196, 203.

52 Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, §15–16.

53 Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, §3 and §47. On Byzantium as a whole, see §38–71.

54 Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, §40.

55 Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, §68.

and described Byzantine visual culture as dull, servile and corrupt.[56] Freeman's description of Byzantium as defined by its 'Oriental despotism' was also clearly influenced by Gibbon.[57] The language of Freeman's architectural history paid tribute to the great Enlightenment writer, saying that Byzantium was Roman in name only, 'one of the countless dynasties which, from the earliest times have risen and fallen in Eastern lands', marked by tyranny, feuds, fratricides and the stagnation of art and science, along with moral and political 'vacancy'.[58] The perceived shift in the visual culture of the Roman Empire, particularly pronounced in its eastern half, from Greco-Roman naturalism to perceived staid conventionalism, was characterised variously by those influenced by Gibbon as either incompetence or, if intentional, a deplorable shift towards the abstract and otherworldly in representation.[59]

Responding to Gibbon, many evocations of Byzantium in British culture perpetuated an otherness to Byzantium as the disruption and discontinuity of the glories of Greco-Roman culture – the underlying belief being in the degenerate society that Gibbon had painted. A re-evaluation of Byzantium began to emerge in the first half of the nineteenth century, however, and perceptions began to change. Even so, continued disdain for the medieval Roman Empire persisted well into the nineteenth century with influential Anglo-Irish historian W. E. H. Lecky (1838–1903) asserting in his *History of European Morals* of 1869 that the Byzantine Empire was 'without a single exception, the most thoroughly base and despicable form that civilization has yet assumed … there has been no other enduring civilization so absolutely destitute of all forms and elements of greatness'.[60]

The corresponding negative view of Byzantine cultural outputs as embodying atrophy and decline was pernicious and enduring. Even as interest in Byzantine art and architecture was increasing in British scholarship in the 1850s and 1860s, the then Director of the British Museum, Anthony Panizzi (1797–1879), was famously asked before a Select Committee at Westminster in 1860: 'You have also, I imagine Byzantine, Oriental, Mexican and Peruvian antiquities stowed away in the basement?' His response was telling: 'Yes, a few of them; and I may well add, that I do not think it any great loss that they are not better

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56 Kugler, *Handbook*.
57 Freeman, *A History*, 165.
58 Freeman, *A History*, 165.
59 This approach later culminated – or reached its nadir, depending on one's stance on the issue – in Berenson, *The Arch of Constantine*.
60 Lecky, *History of European Morals*, 13–14.

placed than they are'.[61] This sentiment was also reflected in the fact that the number of both early Christian and Byzantine antiquities on display until the 1970s was negligible. Panizzi's statement demonstrates the sustained disavowal of early Christian and Byzantine outputs in British culture in some quarters, but the framing question betrays the enduring connection in Victorian mindsets between the medieval Greek empire, the Oriental East and the exotic, rather than the Latin West. In this regard, Newman and Pollen's decision to build an early Christian basilica with a Byzantinising interior at this date should be seen as intentional and striking. It is best understood within the context of the first revival basilicas of Europe, which similarly conflated the early Christian and Byzantine styles to express the desire to revive the Christian faith in the face of social, political and religious flux.

The reclamation of Byzantine architecture in Germany and France

The second quarter of the nineteenth century saw the first attempts, particularly in German and French scholarship, to define Byzantine art and architecture with more clarity and respect, placing it in a continuous cultural evolution from Greece and Rome as opposed to characterisations based on rupture and decline.[62] This occurred under the influence of Romanticism – what Silvia Pedone has called 'the Romantic rediscovery of the national heritage of the dark and yet Christian Middle Age'.[63] As interest in ideas of national artistic characteristics and their origins burgeoned under the influence of German Idealism, especially Hegel, a more positive interest in Byzantine art and architecture also began to emerge, notably in the 1840s. Emergent European nations sought increasingly to define and delimit their individual cultural histories as they developed out of classical antiquity, and medieval styles were gradually disentangled and understood in a more historically and

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61   *Report from the Select Committee on the British Museum*, xvi, 183, paragraph 18. Quoted and discussed in relation to how this situation was rectified through the pioneering work of curator and keeper Ormonde Maddock Dalton (1866–1945) in Entwistle 'O. M. Dalton'.

62   See Bullen, 'The Byzantine revival'.

63   Pedone, 'A critical approach', 92. The emergence of Byzantine art history as an academic discipline among French and German scholars cemented interest in Byzantine art and architecture. See Jeffreys et al. 'Byzantine studies', esp. 10–11. On the origins of the interest in French scholarship in Byzantine art and architecture, see Pedone, 'A critical approach'. Among the most influential scholarly studies were Texier, 'Sainte-Sophie'; Texier, *Description de l'Asie Mineure*; Von Quast, *Die alt-christlichen Bauwerke*; Salzenberg, *Alt-christliche Baudenkmale*; Didron, *Iconographie chrétienne*.

geographically consistent manner, often determined by what Robert Nelson has termed a 'politically motivated historicism'.[64]

The German Romantic polymath Friedrich Schlegel (1772–1829) and the erudite antiquarian brothers Sulpiz and Melchior Boisserée (1783–1854 and 1786–1851, respectively) developed the idea that the Romanesque churches of the Rhine had inherited from the Greek tradition by means of Byzantine architecture, with Sulpiz terming them 'Neugriechisch' in 1810 as a synonym for 'Byzantine', though he also recognised their Roman inheritance and seems also to have coined the term Romanesque (romanisch) in this regard, first using it in private correspondence in 1811.[65] French scholars such as Alexandre de Laborde (1773–1842) began to differentiate between the Byzantine and the Romanesque, which were often conflated, and Byzantine influence was also traced within the indigenous building tradition in France.[66] Archaeologist and medieval art historian Félix de Verneilh (1820–1864) famously traced the domed churches of medieval France in Aquitaine back to Byzantine antecedents in his *L'architecture byzantine en France* (1851).[67] The restoration of the medieval church of St Front in Périgueux by architect Paul Abadie (1812–1884) from 1852, and the discovery of its domes long hidden under a tiled roof, became the focus of interest in the debate over whether the Byzantine influence was direct or by means of Italian Romanesque architecture. Verneilh's work, which championed the former perspective, was expanded upon and given weight and authority through the work of Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1814–1879) in his *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture française* (1854–68).[68]

French scholarship, in particular, informed the more positive receptions of Byzantine architecture that began to emerge in Britain from the 1850s onwards.[69] Thomas Leverton Donaldson (1795–1885),

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64 For example, Nelson discusses Friedrich Wilhelm IV of Prussia's interest in early Christian antiquities as related to a reforming desire in relation to the German Protestant church that was itself connected to the consolidation of imperial power. Nelson, *Hagia Sophia, 1850–1950*, 40–4. See also Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 34.

65 Brownlee, 'Neugriechisch/Néo-Grec', 18. He first used the term 'romisch' in a letter to Goethe on 17 June 1811 and later used it in print for the first time in 1823.

66 Nayrolles, *L'invention de l'art*, 64–5, 71, 83, 91.

67 Verneilh, *L'architecture byzantine*.

68 Discussed in more detail in Bullen, 'The Byzantine revival'.

69 A recent article by Nikolaos Karydis, 'Discovering the Byzantine art of building', has shown how the work of Texier, Couchaud and Lenoir in particular influenced a series of lectures on Byzantine architecture delivered at the Royal Academy and Royal Institute of British Architects in the 1940s and 50s by Charles Robert Cockerell (1843), Edwin Nash (1847), Thomas Leverton Donaldson (1853) and John Louis Petit (1858) which were interested in its relevance for ecclesiastical design in England. Karydis cites them as 'some of the earliest attempts in England

professor of architecture and co-founder of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), gave an address in 1853 – 'On a certain class of Gallo-Byzantine churches in and near Périgueux in France' – which drew upon the scholarship of Verneilh and Albert Lenoir (1801–1891). Donaldson's paper was recorded in an article with the same title in *The Builder*, and in it he claimed that Byzantine influences could be traced in some English Romanesque architecture as in France.[70]

The Byzantine tradition also grew in popularity with the keen interest of Romantic thinkers in transitional cultural styles, who saw these as suited to modern expressions due to their potential for dissonance and inherent embodiment of liminality and flux. The Byzantine as a liminal style garnered interest for architects such as Henri Labrouste (1801–1875), Léon Vaudoyer (1803–1872) and particularly Ludovic Vitet (1802–1873), who knew Sulpiz Boisserée and translated his term into the 'Néo-Grec' following his German tour of 1829. All these architects characterised the style as one of synthesis, critique and transition between the ancient and modern eras, emerging as the Greek classical tradition intersected with and responded creatively to Christianity. It provided a malleable style that could be channelled for modern requirements because of the tensions at its core.[71]

The influence of Philhellenism and the birth of art history as a discipline were also determinative in this regard. The desire to trace a continuous historical lineage from Greco-Roman antiquity by means of Byzantium to the modern period was bolstered by the Greek War of Independence, the establishment of the Kingdom of Greece in 1832 and the subsequent emergence of the nationalist and irredentist *Megali Idea* which sought the restoration of the Byzantine Empire in modern terms.[72]

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to explore Byzantine architecture'. Pollen's work in Dublin can strengthen the idea that there was interest in the suitability of the Byzantine tradition for ecclesiastical architecture earlier than previously thought in the British Isles.

70 He singled out the Church of St Mary the Virgin at Iffley, Oxfordshire, c. 1160. His suggestion concerning the influence of the Byzantine tradition on Norman architecture was not accepted by some of those present. Donaldson, 'On a certain class', 66–9.

71 This was under the influence of the thought of Claude Henri Saint-Simon, the founder of French socialism. See Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 57. For a general survey of French attitudes to Byzantine culture, see Spieser 'Hellénisme'. One of the first volumes dedicated to Byzantine architecture in this way was young architect André Couchaud's *Choix d'églises byzantines en Grece* (1842). Couchaud, who was a pupil of Labrouste, defined the Byzantine as an evolution of the Greek tradition as it took on Christian form. See Levine, 'The Romantic idea'. The archaeologist and art historian Albert Lenoir (1801–91) also published a seminal article on Byzantine architecture in Greece, Constantinople and Armenia. Lenoir, 'Histoire de l'architecture byzantine'. This was followed by his major book, which also described Byzantine monuments. Lenoir, *Architecture monastique*.

72 On Philhellenism and Romanticism, see Tsigakou, *The Rediscovery of Greece*; Angelomateis-Tsougarakeis, *The Eve of Greek Revival*; Tolias, *British Travellers in Greece*; Tsigakou,

Byzantine art and architecture were thus increasingly reframed under the impetus of the 'New Greek' movements (Neugriechisch or Neó-Grec, in Germany and France respectively) and attempts were made to place Byzantium into a teleological history of European art.[73] Under the influence of European Romanticism, the 'Greekness' of Byzantium often became a unifying theme that emphasised cultural continuity, allowing the development of Byzantine art and architecture to be placed meaningfully within European history.[74]

Architecturally, this increased interest manifested gradually across Europe in eclectic styles that drew upon, rather than closely emulated, the Byzantine style. French architects took tentative steps into the Neo-Byzantine, with still limited exposure to Byzantine forms, as in Vaudoyer's church of Notre-Dame-de-la-Garde, 1853 (completed in 1896), which towered over Marseilles as a symbol of the city and which employed not only the round arch and polychromatic brickwork but also the Byzantine dome.[75] The earlier German Rundbogenstil of the 1830s and 40s – a broad movement, generally defined as an attempt to create a round-arched style of architecture that was suited to modern needs – drew somewhat eclectically on not only the Renaissance heritage but also Byzantine and Romanesque forms, based on the commonly held view that the former had informed the latter in Germanic lands.[76] The Byzantine tradition was thus gradually written into the histories and modern expressions of European architecture, but the earliest stirrings of Byzantine revival in Europe were found in this German Rundbogenstil, particularly in its 'early Christian' basilican variant, a tradition to which the Dublin church was connected – not least through Pollen and Newman's visits to Munich in 1847, but possibly also through Newman's connections to Prussia and the Nazarene movement in Rome.

Through Romantic Eyes; Güthenke, 'Translating philhellenism', esp. 181–2; Wallace and Lambropoulos, 'Hellenism, philhellenism'. See especially Vöhler, Alekou and Pechlivanos, *Concepts and Functions of Philhellenism*, which explores 'the relation between Greco-Roman hellenophilia and modern Philhellenism and Europeanness', 2, esp. the chapters in Parts II and III.

73 On the elusive meaning of the term Néo-Grec and the difficulties of identifying its expression in the built environment, see Grieder, 'The search for the Néo-Grec'. For discussion and further bibliography, see Brownlee, 'Neugriechisch/Néo-Grec'.

74 On the reinvention of the Byzantine Empire as Hellenic under the influence of European Romanticism, see Mackridge, 'Cultural difference', 302–3.

75 Bergdoll, *Léon Vaudoyer*, 224–30. The cathedral was inspired by the material in André Couchaud's *Choix d'églises byzantines en Gréce*, 1842.

76 For example, Stieglitz in his *Von altdeutscher Baukunst* of 1820, 22–7, thought that the close connections between Constantinople, Italy and Germany were sufficient to explain the influence.

The Rundbogenstil and the nineteenth-century quandary over style

Although the neoclassical and Gothic revival traditions dominated nine-teenth-century historicist architectures, attempts to understand and revive early medieval, round-arched styles formed an important part of the debates concerning which styles were most suitable for the expression of present identities. This particularly played out in German-speaking regions in relation to the Rundbogenstil (Round-arched style), used as a descriptive label for both the Romanesque style of the tenth and eleventh centuries and for the round-arched revival style loosely based on it, which developed in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, particularly in Bavaria and Prussia. It was through this round-arched, but eclectic, historicist style that the preliminary stirrings of a Byzantine revival in architecture were felt in Europe.

German-speaking scholars were particularly keen to disentangle and define terminologies and trajectories of influence for pre-Gothic, round-arched architectures of the western Middle Ages. The impetus behind these discussions remained for the most part to account for the origins of the more popular Gothic style and its evolutionary relation-ship to the architecture of classical antiquity. In the 1820s, architectural historians such as Christian Ludwig Stieglitz (1756–1836) were using 'Neugriechisch' and 'Byzantine' as synonyms to describe the medieval Germanic architectural styles from the period of Charlemagne the Great (d. 814) to the twelfth century.[77] Sulpiz Boisserée also used these terms interchangeably, but 'Romanesque' was increasingly being used to describe the ultimate debt of all round-arched styles to Rome. In his collected works of 1823, the *Grundzüge der gotischen Baukunst* (Basics of Gothic Architecture), Schlegel assessed the neologisms of his day pertaining to early medieval round-arched styles. He chose at this point to discard terms such as 'Neo-Greek' and 'Neo-Roman', or indeed the 'Greco-Christian' he had used in an earlier text, to describe the round-arched building traditions preceding the Gothic, preferring instead the broader term 'early Christian' (*altchristlich*).[78]

Many terms were thus used interchangeably without any real historical precision or agreement. Influential art historian Carl Friedrich

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77 On this confusion of nomenclature, see Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 17.
78 Schlegel, *Grundzüge der gotischen Baukunst*, 161–3. 'Greco-Christian' had been used in his earlier *Briefe auf einer Reise durch die Niederlande* (Letters on a Trip through the Netherlands, 1806) which was revised and included in his later work.

von Rumohr (1785–1843) explored these issues of nomenclature more comprehensively and the origins of Germanic Romanesque and pre-Romanesque styles, such as the Carolingian and Ottonian styles, in 1831, including the issue of the extent of influence from the Eastern Empire on these styles, which became known as the 'Byzantine question'. He described all medieval schools of architecture, including the Byzantine tradition, as ultimately having their origin in the early Christian basilicas of Rome, advocating for use of the general term 'early Christian' or 'Christian-Roman' (*christlich-römisch*) for early round-arched medieval architectures.[79] Architect Leo von Klenze (1784–1864), one of the main proponents of neoclassicism, who believed that classical Greek architecture provided the absolute standard for beauty and truth, used terms like the medieval basilican style to convey this same idea, which persisted well into the nineteenth century: that all round-arched medieval styles could be seen as belonging to a broad 'early Christian' tradition as they devolved from Roman architecture.[80]

At the peak of these debates over nomenclature and origins, in the early 1820s, the term 'Rundbogenstil' developed as a stylistic label, coined by either historian Johann Friedrich Böhmner (1795–1863) or architect and theorist Heinrich Hübsch (1795–1863), to describe what is now known as the Romanesque architecture of the tenth and eleventh centuries in the Rhineland. By the 1830s, terms like 'Neugriechisch' and 'Byzantine' were dropping out of use, and by the end of the 1840s, the term Romanesque (*romanisch*) – discussed further in Chapter 4 – had mostly supplanted other terms, including the Rundbogenstil.

Although coined to describe medieval buildings, the term Rundbogenstil came to be used for the revivalist style inspired by them. This style emerged in the second quarter of the nineteenth century as the dilemma created by the expanded choice of historical styles burgeoned, prompting increased calls for agreement on the most appropriate style for use in Germanic lands.[81] Based on the round arch and notoriously difficult to define visually, because it drew eclectically on basilican,

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79   Von Rumohr, *Italienische Forschungen* III, 158–64, 178, 317. For discussion, see Germann, *Gothic Revival*, 50; Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 19.

80   Von Klenze, *Anweisung zur Architectur*, 14, 20. On Klenze's racial legitimation of the classical style based on the common origin of the German and Greek peoples in the Caucasus, see Klose, 'Theorie als Apologie', 126–7.

81   On this dilemma, see Schwarzer, *German Architectural Theory*, esp. 27; Halmi, 'The anti-historicism'. For the first attempt to characterise the various aspects of this style, see Hitchcock, *Architecture*, esp. 55. For the definition of the Rundbogenstil, see Curran, 'The German Rundbogenstil'; Nerdinger, *Romantik und Restauration*; Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 36–93.

Byzantine, Romanesque, Italian Gothic and quattrocento architectures, the style was most famously connected to King Ludwig I of Bavaria's (r. 1825–48) building activities in Munich in the 1830s and those of the Prussian kings Friedrich Wilhelm III (r. 1797–1840) and Wilhelm IV (r. 1840–61). A conceptualisation of the popular building style was provided by the architect Heinrich Hübsch in his small book *In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?* (In What Style Should we Build?) of 1828.[82] Hübsch advocated not for the emulation of particular period styles – effectively allowing for features from different historical periods to be used more or less eclectically – but for architectural styles that were appropriate to their environmental and material conditions. His text reads in many ways as a manifesto for structural rationalism – which has drawn comparisons to the Bauhaus functionalists a century later.[83]

Abrogating ideological revivalism per se, Hübsch called for structural truthfulness, the honest handling and aesthetic exposure of local building materials, the employment of technological methods that regions were proficient in and the need for architecture to meet contemporary usages. The ostensible anti-revivalist sentiments of his text pertained to the prevailing Greco-Roman classicism that he was writing against as being ill-suited to the German environment and context; the trabeated system suited the hardier stones of Greece, according to Hübsch, not the softer materials of brick, sandstone and limestone and the harsh weather of the northern European climate, where the arcuated system was most appropriate. Furthermore, German technological experience was in the arch-and-vault systems of impressive medieval churches. Notwithstanding the presenting material considerations of Hübsch's 1828 text, there were clear symbolic and spiritual motivations attached to the style.

Despite Hübsch's proto-modernist manifesto for structural rationalism, there were undoubtedly ideological motivations behind his advocacy of a round-arched style that would take its leave from the native Romanesque. Indeed, his essay was prepared on the occasion of the festival of the great painter, printmaker and theorist of the German Renaissance Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528), held in Dürer's hometown of Nuremberg in 1828. More specifically it was prepared for the meeting at the festival of the Brotherhood of Saint Luke, derogatively known as the Nazarenes on account of their long robes and hair and their

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82 Hübsch, *In welchem Style*. On Hübsch, see Bergdoll, 'Archaeology'; Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 1–35.
83 Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 1.

decidedly medieval lifestyle, which complemented their revivalist ethos for painting. Hübsch was closely connected to the Brotherhood, to whom he dedicated his seminal book. Although his text argued against classicism from the perspective of material and technological suitability, his advocacy of the style was a matter of Christian symbolism too, which came to the fore more clearly in his later writings and works.[84]

The Brotherhood, formed by young students Johann Friedrich Overbeck and Franz Pforr in Vienna in 1809, came to centre around a colony of painters in Rome after they moved there in 1810 and were joined soon after by artists who proved hugely influential in the movement, particularly Peter Cornelius (1783–1867) who took Pforr's position as co-leader of the group following his death in 1812. Inspired by their Christian spirituality and a sense of 'nationalism', they were determined to reinvigorate Germanic art on the model of quattrocento Italian masters. Rejecting the late Baroque style of the academy and the glorification of classical antiquity, they sought a 'primitivist' turn. Far from their historicism embodying a staid and retrograde conservatism, it sought fresh direction and hope for the future: they believed that art could transform reality in an era of spiritual, social and political upheaval.[85] It is unsurprising that this movement held a good deal of interest for Newman, discussed fully in the following chapter. Hübsch, following time spent with them in Rome in the mid-1810s, remained keenly interested throughout his career in creating a total work of art in the face of secularism, comprising architecture, painting and sculpture that would be suited to his German context and revive Christian spirituality, under the influence of the Nazarenes.[86] A comparable spiritual and nationalistic ethos underpinned many of the buildings considered part of the Rundbogenstil movement (many of which had interior murals painted by the Nazarenes), which form a crucial part of the history of nineteenth-century revivalism in Europe, particularly the development of the Romanesque, Renaissance and Byzantine architectural movements.

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84 Bergdoll, 'Archaeology'.
85 Grewe's excellent book *The Nazarenes* challenges previous misconceptions of the artists in this regard and heralds the inherent modernism of their 'art of the concept'.
86 This was most fully developed in Hübsch, *Die Architektur und ihr Verhältnis zur heutigen Malerei und Sculptur* which built upon his famous early manifesto. Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 2. Although the term *Gesamtkunstwerk* (total work of art) was formulated by Richard Wagner following the 1848 revolutions, it was present as an idea from the French revolution as a response to the secularisation of art that resulted from the Enlightenment, what Hegel characterised as the shift from the living work of art to religious art works in the museum, and the alienation of secularised bourgeois society. See Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 455–6; Roberts, *The Total Work of Art*, esp. 1–14, 51–2.

Early Rundbogenstil buildings were round-arched but eclectic, and in Ludwig I's Munich, they formed part of the ideologically motivated but inherently diverse range of historicist styles that he used to aggrandise his capital. Often referred to as 'Byzantine' or 'Neo-Greek', in keeping with the confusion of nomenclature that still persisted at this date, many of the Rundbogenstil buildings there were influenced by Byzantine design, but also by the German and Northern Italian Romanesque and Early Gothic.[87] The Rundbogenstil manifested most prominently in the buildings lining Ludwig I's Ludwigstraße, built between 1828–44. The leading architect of the style there was Friedrich von Gärtner (1791–1847), professor at the Academy of Architecture, Munich, who played a seminal role in the development of the style in buildings such as the Ludwigskirche, 1829–44, and the Staatsbibliothek, 1832–43, on the Ludwigstraße. Gärtner's conception for ecclesiastical design was not so much utilitarian but overtly stylistic and symbolic: inspired by early Christian basilicas, he desired a synthetic style of the Greek and the Gothic which he deemed most appropriate for Catholic churches.[88] Gärtner said of the Ludwigskirche, seen as the epitome of the more Romanesque-inspired Rundbogenstil in ecclesiastical design, with its Neo-Romanesque façade and interior murals by Cornelius, who was brought to Munich: 'It is according to the King's wishes, in a purified Byzantine style. But I'm not sticking to that too strictly, only interjecting it insofar as it is generally expressive of a Christian or Catholic church.'[89] Ludwigskirche was not only a parish church but the official church of the Ludwig-Maximilian-Universität, with its historicising style intended not only as a statement of the rejuvenation of the faith but also of the close connection between education and religion in Ludwig's Catholic Munich.

Ironically, one of the earliest and most characteristic of these buildings, the Allerheiligen-Hofkirche (Court Church of All Saints, 1827–37; destroyed 1944, rebuilt from 1986), was designed by the convinced philhellene and classicist Leo von Klenze. Although Klenze did not embrace medieval revival styles, he was obliged to create something along the lines of the Cappella Palatina, commissioned in 1132 in Palermo, Sicily, following Ludwig's visits there in 1817 and 1823.[90] After talking Ludwig down from a complete emulation of the

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87 See, for example, von Heideloff, *Der kleine Byzantiner*, 11–13, which refers to the Rundbogenstil as the Byzantine but also the neo-Greek, Old Gothic, Frankish, Saxon, Norman and Carolingian style.

88 A letter from Gärtner to Wagner on 13 January 1828, quoted in Nerdinger, *Friedrich von Gärtner*, 209. See also Eggert, *Friedrich von Gärtner*, 21.

89 Letter to Wagner on 8 February 1829. Nerdinger, *Friedrich von Gärtner*, 312.

90 On Klenze's reluctant participation in the Rundbogenstil, see Buttlar, *Leo von Klenze*, 10.

prototype, he designed the church with a Romanesque façade and with domes and barrel vaults inside painted with frescoes on a gold ground by the Nazarene painter Heinrich von Hess (1798–1863) – because real Byzantinising mosaics were not possible. The golden-hued domed interior was widely celebrated as Byzantine and clearly reminiscent of the interiors of Venetian Byzantine buildings like San Marco.[91]

In the long term it was the question posed by Hübsch concerning the challenges of historicism, choice and eclecticism, rather than the solution given in his 1828 text, that persisted, with its pithy encapsulation of the dilemma of style faced by nineteenth-century architects, theorists and patrons and the attendant debates among German architects and theorists in the 1830s and 40s. Indeed, architect Carl Albert Rosenthal (b. 1801) was still posing precisely this question to the Association of German Architects in 1844, because the issue of an agreed national style had yet to be resolved (and never would be). His proposed solution was not Hübsch's Rundbogenstil, but the Spitzbogenstil – the Gothic, pointed-arch revivalist style.[92] By the 1840s, the Rundbogenstil had begun to wane in favour of more neatly delineated historicising styles like the Gothic and Renaissance revival traditions, and by the 1860s it was reserved mostly for utilitarian buildings, resonating more so with its original characterisation in Hübsch's text, rather than its grander ideological use concerning the revival of faith.

The Rundbogenstil buildings of Munich were lauded in English publications and Pollen visited there in 1847, when students and antiquarians were flocking from far and wide between 1840 and 1850 to study the architecture of the 'Gärtner style' and the revival of mural painting there by the Nazarenes, whom Ludwig I had brought from Rome.[93] The English were very keen in this regard: indeed, Gärtner was elected as an honorary member of the Institute of British Architects in 1835 and Cornelius was invited to London in November of 1841 to consult on the redecoration of the Houses of Parliament, with the hope that he might inspire a national school of English history painting along the lines of the Nazarenes.[94] During his visit to Munich, Pollen

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91 Nerdinger, *Romantik und Restauration*, 216–20; Watkin and Mellinghoff, *German Architecture*, 154–5; Haltrich, *Leo von Klenze*; Buttlar, *Leo von Klenze*, 232–42; Berger, 'Les projets byzantins', esp. 75–7. See also Nelson, *Hagia Sophia*, 40.

92 See Rosenthal, 'In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?'.

93 A comprehensive and detailed account was given, for example, in *The Civil Engineer and Architect's Journal* in 1851. See Crace, 'Decoration'. See also McParland, 'Beyond Ruskin', 130.

94 Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 76.

Figure 2.2 Georg Friedrich Ziebland, Basilica of St Boniface, Munich, Germany, 1835–50. Photomechanical print of the interior view towards the apse. Digital file taken from the original in Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C. 20540 USA. Downloaded from http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsca.00070. No known restrictions

was greatly interested in Klenze's Allerheiligen-Hofkirche and Gärtner's Ludwigskirche, but he was particularly interested in Georg Friedrich Ziebland's Basilica of St Boniface (1835–50), destroyed in the Second World War, which was under construction at the time.

Replete with monolithic marble columns, a brightly painted open timber roof and murals by Hess – including religious history scenes over the arcade and a Byzantinising pseudo-mosaic in the apse – this imitation sixth-century basilica inspired by Sant'Apollinare in Classe and San Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, became a definitive exemplar of the 'early Christian' variety of Rundbogenstil (Figure 2.2). Ludwig I had founded the Benedictine Abbey to which the church belonged as part of his efforts to reinvigorate the Catholic faith in Munich after the secularism of the early nineteenth century. He gave the community jurisdiction over the nearby museum district to indicate the intersection of religion with the arts and sciences as part of his resistance of secularism and reinvigoration of a Catholic society. Newman appreciated the church on his visit to Munich in 1847 and Pollen saw that St Boniface, in particular, held

importance for contemporary design.[95] The arrangement of its elevation clearly exerted an influence over the design in Dublin, discussed further in the following chapter, along with its aforementioned prototypes in Ravenna.[96]

Pollen and Newman had both visited Munich separately in 1847 and both had admired the Rundbogenstil buildings there, particularly their Byzantinising paintings by the Nazarenes. Pollen described the Munich churches in detail in his writings, and he painted the ceiling of Merton college chapel in a colourful medieval style inspired by the Nazarenes upon his return, between 1849–50. However, Pollen, like Newman, was interested in an architecture for the nineteenth century and held disdain for anything that approached medieval plagiarism.[97] As such, he approached the buildings in Munich with both fascination and criticism, commenting on their lack of creativity and innovation and the staid nature of the heavy colouring used.[98] Pollen was stimulated by such buildings but wary of direct emulation. Pollen's work in Dublin was intended as response in the truest sense – the evolution of a type in Newmanian terms, as will be seen – rather than emulation. It is clear, however, that the homage to the basilicas of Ravenna and San Marco that he saw in Munich, which were combined with the work of Romantic painters from the Nazarene movement, played a part in inspiring Newman and Pollen's own basilican response in Dublin. Newman's insistence on including Nazarene-inspired paintings, discussed in the following chapter, was clearly informed by his visit, having travelled to Munich with the painter Heinrich von Hess on his way back to England from Rome. Though University Church may be compared in both motivation and style to the 'early Christian' variety of Rundbogenstil, so connected to the Nazarene movement in Catholic Munich and the desire to reinvigorate the faith, it also benefits from being compared to the expression of this revivalist style in Protestant Prussia.

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95   The connection was first made in Curran, *Newman House*. Discussed again in McCarthy, 'University Church'.

96   Nerdinger, *Romantik und Restauration*, 263–8; Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 125.

97   In this he was influenced by the ideas of development, and the corresponding repudiation of 'copyism', supported by the Oxford Society and articulated with force by George Gilbert Scott in *A Plea for the Faithful Restoration of our Ancient Churches*, esp. 74. Discussed further in Chapter 4.

98   See his description of St Peter's in Munich, for example, in which he criticises its dull use of colour and medieval plagiarisms. Pollen, *John Hungerford Pollen*, 85.

The 'early Christian' Rundbogenstil in Prussia

A Rundbogenstil revivalist response based on early Christian architecture took hold in Prussia under Kings Friedrich Wilhelm III and then Wilhelm IV, particularly in church projects in Berlin in the 1830s and 1840s, as part of larger efforts to reinvigorate and unify the Protestant faith. Kathleen Curran charts such universalising ideals concerning the desire for a unified and revived Christian church across many of those advocating for early Christian revival styles, ideals that were closely tied to the philosophy of German Romanticism and particularly its expression through the Nazarenes. Moreover, Curran adroitly traces the influence of Christian Karl Josias von Bunsen (1791–1860), a key figure in this regard, who linked together Rome of the Nazarenes in the 1810s and 20s, the early Christian Rundbogenstil of post-Napoleonic Prussia and the Romanesque revival in London of the 1840s, along with Ludwig's Bavaria. Bunsen may also be said to have played an indirect role in inspiring the design of the Dublin church.

Bunsen was secretary and chief of the Prussian legation to the Holy See in Rome (1818–23 and 1823–38, respectively) and then ambassador to the Court of St James (1842–4) and close advisor to Wilhelm IV on matters of ecclesiastical and liturgical reform, particularly in relation to church design. It is clear from Newman's letters that Newman was well-acquainted with Bunsen, whom he called a 'most amiable and accomplished person', during his time spent in Rome in early Spring 1833.[99] In 1833, Newman visited his famous second-floor apartment in the Palazzo Caffarelli in Rome, on the Capitoline Hill, where he lived with his English wife, Frances, née Waddington (1791–1876), which was a hub of Nazarene activity and host venue for an interminable stream of intellectuals and creatives.[100] Newman's correspondence and diary entries during that trip also suggest that he visited the Roman sites with Bunsen, whose well-known expertise in early Christian architecture and strong convictions concerning its suitability for the contemporary liturgy meant that this surely formed part of their discussions.[101] Newman's affective response to the Roman sites, which had 'stolen away' half of his heart, in his own words, comes across clearly in his writings; he recounts with great emotion his experiences in the early Christian

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99 See, for example, letters dated 10 and 17 March, 1833. *Letters and Diaries* 3, 247, 252.
100 Preyer, 'Bunsen and the Anglo-American literary community'; Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 103.
101 See the entry for 12 March 1833. *Letters and Diaries* 3, 247.

churches of Rome.[102] No doubt this first trip, prior to his conversion to Catholicism, was formative for him and planted the seeds for what Pollen would later describe as Newman's 'strong attachment' to those 'ancient churches', when explaining Newman's directions for the design of the Dublin church.

The Nazarene painter and scholar of Italian history Ernst Platner (1773–1855) had been commissioned by the German publisher Johann Friedrich Cotta in the winter of 1817–18 to write a guidebook to Rome – entitled *Beschreibung der Stadt Rom* (Description of the City of Rome) – and Bunsen was asked to assist him with the parts devoted to medieval and modern Rome.[103] As an accompaniment to this erudite two-volume history and topography of the art and architecture of Rome, which materialised between 1829–42, architects J. G. Gutensohn and J. M. Knapp were commissioned to draw up the ground plans, elevations and interior views and details of the famous early Christian basilicas, published incrementally between 1822–7.[104] These illustrations constituted the most accurate and complete illustrations of the early Roman churches, and they were reissued when Bunsen published his influential book *Die Basilikien des christlichen Roms* (The Basilicas of Christian Rome), in 1842. The increasing interest in the early Christian basilicas of Rome, evidenced by these emerging studies, was compounded by the devastating fire of 1823 that destroyed the important early Christian papal basilica of San Paolo fuori le Mura: its rebuilding over a sustained period of time and the attendant discussions concerning how its original design could be preserved garnered interest from across the Christian world. The engravings from Bunsen's text were included as chromolithographs in Henry Gally Knight's *Ecclesiastical Architecture of Italy from the Time of Constantine to the Fifteenth Century*, published in 1843, which exerted a great influence on the revival of basilican and round-arched styles, and on the increase in decorative polychromy, in English churches. It was a work that Pollen would undoubtedly have been familiar with.

Pollen and Newman would have been aware of Bunsen's authoritative publications and his opinions on early Christian architecture, but it is unclear to what extent they were influenced by Bunsen's writings directly. Figures such as Ruskin lamented the fact that his seminal text on early Christian architecture had not been translated into English, but

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102 11 April 1833, *Letters and Diaries* 3, 284.
103 Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 104–5.
104 Gutensohn and Knapp, *Denkmale der christlichen Religion*.

it is nonetheless clear that Ruskin had discussed the basilica with Bunsen himself and taken on board some of his ideas.[105] Bunsen, like other architectural writers of the mid-nineteenth century, saw the basilican and the Byzantine as distinct traditions that were nonetheless closely related.[106] The antipathetic review of Pollen's article in *The Ecclesiologist* particularly criticised the fact that he had made no mention of Bunsen's respected work on the topic in this regard, castigating Pollen's views that contradicted the received wisdom in seeing basilican and Byzantine churches as forming part of one continuous tradition.[107]

Curran traces how Bunsen, as the acknowledged expert on early Christian architecture, had both a direct and indirect impact upon the formation of round-arched revival styles, through his authoritative writings and his interactions with significant figures in Rome and London. Ludwig I had been influenced by Bunsen's knowledge and enthusiasm for early Christian basilicas when he visited Rome in the 1810s, which informed his historicist endeavours in Munich. When influential Prussian architect and painter Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781–1841) visited Rome in 1824, he engaged in many outings and evenings with Bunsen that had early Christian basilicas as the topic of conversation. Curran argues that Bunsen's thought and activities informed Schinkel's four *Vorstadtkirche*, or suburban churches, 1832–5, under King Friedrich Wilhelm III, particularly the Nazareth Church, Wedding, and St Johannes, Alt-Moabit (enlarged and decorated in 1853–7), which were the first of the early Christian Rundbogenstil buildings in Berlin, built to combat social problems bred by urban population explosion.[108] The buildings were intended to house relatively large congregations and to have an unimpeded view of the altar and to be economical in terms of costs: it seems similar concerns prompted

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105 Ruskin, who acknowledged Lord Lindsay as an authority on the symbolism of the early Christian basilica, lamented that Bunsen's important text on the early Christian basilica had not been translated into English in *The Stones*. It is clear that Ruskin had discussed the basilica quite extensively with Bunsen. See Ruskin, *Works* 10, 22, 445.

106 This was outlined in his theses presented to the crown prince and reiterated in later writings including Bunsen's influential book on the basilicas of Christian Rome (Bunsen, *Die Basiliken des christlichen Roms*). Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 116, 184. Other German scholars like Hübsch similarly differentiated between the early Christian (Basiliken-Style) and Byzantine (altbyzantinisch) styles: although they were similar in form, Hübsch preferred the simplicity of the former over the confusion of the latter's decoration. For discussion, see Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 15.

107 'The "Atlantis"', *The Ecclesiologist*, 103–5.

108 Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 107–20. Franz-Duhme and Röper-Vogt, *Schinkels Vorstadt-kirchen* do not evidence the same reading. On historicism and cultural politics in Prussia in the early nineteenth century more generally, see Toews, *Becoming Historical*. On Schinkel specifically in this regard, see esp. 120–37, 141–52.

the use of early Christian building types across denominations and contexts.[109] In 1827, Bunsen presented in Berlin his 'Twenty-one theses of church building' to the then Crown Prince Wilhelm, in an initial attempt to theorise the building of modern churches according to such liturgical functionalism; Curran argues that this kindled in the prince his enduring interest in the suitability of early Christian basilicas for present requirements.[110]

The increasing interest in using the early basilican style for modern churches in Germanic lands was not purely pragmatic, as in Dublin. Curran compares King Wilhelm IV and his brother-in-law Ludwig I's shared aims during their reigns, despite their respective Protestantism and Catholicism, of revitalising the influence of the Church in the face of expanded state bureaucracies that had flourished under the influence of Enlightenment ideals since the eighteenth century, which informed their respective church-building activities. Wilhelm IV, who saw himself as a second Constantine the Great, desired the unification of the Reformed/Calvinist and Lutheran churches, as had his father, and pursued an ambitious programme of ecclesiastical and liturgical reform and revival modelled on the early Christian church. The early Christian Rundbogenstil became a natural style of choice for him, finding its epitomic expressions in the Heilandskirche (1841–4) and Friedenskirche (1841–9), both by court architect Ludwig Persius (1803–1845).

The Friedenskirche's exterior was Romanesque, but its aisled basilican interior was modelled on the upper basilica of San Clemente in Rome (c. 1100), as sketched by Gutensohn and Knapp, with a coffered ceiling painted blue with golden stars (Figure 2.3). An original thirteenth-century mosaic from the Benedictine monastery of San Cipriano in Murano, near Venice, was transplanted into the apse which had been purchased in 1834 during the destruction of the Italian church.[111] The heavily Byzantinising apse with mosaic and marble revetments became a signature feature of many of these basilican revivalist buildings of the nineteenth century, and in practice the two styles often manifested together in this way because they were so entangled, regardless of attempts to separate them by architectural writers like Bunsen. The conception and design of the Dublin interior bears similarity to the Friedenskirche which was so intimately connected to the interests of King Wilhelm, not directly

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109 The four churches that were built were the second version of the original plan in 1828 to build two larger churches which was scrapped. Bergdoll, *Karl Friedrich Schinkel*, 192–3. On the wider context, see Toews, *Becoming Historical*, 117–206.

110 Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 110.

111 See Sørensen, 'The mosaic in the apse'.

Figure 2.3   Ludwig Persius, Friedenskirche, Berlin, built for King Wilhelm IV, 1841–9. Interior view towards the apse. © Jochen Teufel. Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0. Available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Friedens kirche_%28Potsdam%29,_Innenraum_%282006%29.jpg

but through the emulation of similar models because of the emerging interest in creating Christian basilicas with Byzantine decoration as part of efforts to resist the increasing effects of secularism and to signal analogies with the early imperial church.

By the time Bunsen because ambassador to the Court of St James in England in 1842, having arrived in London in November 1841, Newman had irrevocably changed his position on him, writing 'I distrust Bunsen indefinitely' on more than one occasion in his letters.[112] Indeed, Newman saw him as chief protagonist in the, from Newman's perspective sordid, affair to create an Anglo-Prussian Protestant bishopric in Jerusalem, which was promoted by Lord Ashley (1801–85).[113] This bishopric, supported by members of the low church and seen as symptomatic of the government's overinvolvement with Church affairs, was passed through an act of Parliament which established the episcopal seat in November 1841.[114] Newman suspected that Bunsen – who

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112 See, for example, his letter to J. R. Hope, 11 November 1841. *Letters and Diaries* 8, 324.
113 See Greaves, 'The Jerusalem bishopric'; Jack 'No heavenly Jerusalem'. Newman later described this bishopric as one of the final blows in 1841 that caused him to despair of the apostolicity of the Church of England in his *Apologia*, 210–13.
114 Ker, *John Henry Newman*, 234; Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 181, 212.

considered 'the Nicene Council the first step in the corruption of the Church', according to Newman – was involved in the desire to create a 'Protestant League throughout the world' which would be inevitably broad and liberal.[115] Newman regretted that this plan for Jerusalem, which would mark the beginning of episcopacy for the Prussians, was essentially making 'heretics Bishops'.[116] Given Newman's conversion to Catholicism, his inclusion of the Jerusalem bishopric among the 'three blows' that hastened his conversion and his clear disapprobation of Bunsen, it is somewhat ironic that the round-arched styles that Bunsen was so seminal a protagonist for provided part of the backdrop from which emerged the Dublin church.[117]

Despite various connections to the Rundbogenstil, University Church does not belong to this movement completely in style or conception. The remainder of this chapter and the chapters that follow unpack in greater depth the clear ideological intention behind the selection and execution of its style in relation to its context. Newman's brief for Pollen was for an early basilica that would symbolise the university. The style that emerged, which consciously employed Roman and Byzantine forms, resulted from Pollen's execution of Newman's vision. Early Christian Rundbogenstil churches and University Church both belonged to the broad 'early Christian' basilican idiom which was closely connected to the Nazarene movement and the utopian use of medievalising forms. It was this broad early Christian tradition that encompassed the first stirrings of Byzantine revival in European architecture – a nebulous phenomenon that is itself difficult to define and draw neat parameters around. Indeed, Rumohr presciently deduced the difficulties of ascertaining what should be understood by the adjective 'Byzantine' as applied to architecture, encompassing as it does a thousand years of building traditions which found their origins in Rome.[118] University Church is carefully analysed according to what constituted 'Byzantine' design for Victorians, and more specifically for Pollen, in order to appreciate the place that this Romano-Byzantine church occupies within the early history of Byzantine revival, which first emerged in the eclectic 'early Christian' basilicas of mid-century Europe that sought to advocate for faith in the midst of the flux.

115 Letter to John Keble, 5 October 1841. *Letters and Diaries* 8, 286. See also the letter on 19 November 1841. *Letters and Diaries* 8, 339.
116 *Letters and Diaries* 8, 339.
117 Newman, *Apologia*, 136.
118 Von Rumohr, *Italienische forschungen* III, 192–5.

The revival of Byzantium in Britain

Access to and knowledge of Byzantine monuments increased from the 1850s onwards in Europe.[119] Publications that were intended to be more empirical than the travelogues that had facilitated access to the Byzantine East and its monuments up until that point resulted, such as the famous *Aya Sophia, Constantinople* (1852) by Swiss architect Gaspard Fossati (1809–1883) who had worked on the restoration of the famous building in Constantinople from 1848–50 under Sultan Abdülmecid, alongside his brother Giuseppe (1822–1891).[120] Wilhelm Salzenberg's *Alt-Christliche Baudenkmale von Constantinopel vom V. bis XII. Jahrhundert* (1854) followed, after the architect, the student of Schinkel, travelled to Constantinople in 1848 on behalf of King Wilhelm IV to observe the restoration work and make detailed drawings before the freshly revealed mosaics were covered again with plaster. Influential monographs on the surviving Byzantine monuments in southern Greece and northern Greece, which was still under Ottoman occupation, emerged also which, although largely inexpert and loosely developed, exerted a noticeable impact on scholarship and architectural practices, particularly André Couchaud's *Choix d'églises byzantines en Grèce* (1842), and Charles Texier and Richard Popplewell-Pullan's *Byzantine Architecture* (1864) on the monuments of Greece and Asia Minor.[121] The coloured images in these early works were often determined by a nineteenth-century aesthetic attractive to their European audiences, rather than providing faithful reproductions.[122]

Interest in Byzantium had gained some traction in Britain earlier in the nineteenth century due to increased antiquarian travel to the East, and this contributed to the 'new Byzantium' that began to emerge.[123] The travel writing that accompanied these earlier visits had brought an increased awareness of Byzantium, but the publications were often poorly informed, critical, Orientalising or overly Romanticised, or a mixture of all these things. One of the most widely used sources on Byzantine architecture was the best-selling travelogue written by Robert Curzon (1810–1873), *Visits to the Monasteries in the Levant* (1849), with its appendix on Byzantine art, which characterised Byzantine architecture,

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119 On the relationship between Byzantine revival and travel, particularly towards the end of the century, see Kourelis, 'Early travellers', esp. 42–4.
120 Fossati, *Aya Sofia*. For influential earlier travellers to Constantinople, see Pedone, 'A critical approach' on Charles Texier. For some of his drawings, see Mango, 'Constantinopolitana'.
121 Couchaud, *Choix d'églises*; Texier and Popplewell-Pullan, *Byzantine Architecture*.
122 Kotoula, 'A piece of Sherlock Holmes', 145.
123 Gooch, *History and Historians*, 495.

in the spirit of Gibbon, as a debased attempt to create Roman architecture as the empire fell into decline, when architects could no longer produce what they aspired to. Curzon perpetuated a disparaging view of Byzantine architecture but, by contrast, perceived value in the Byzantine pictorial arts because of their capacity to inculcate religious awe despite their inferiority in comparison to the Italian 'primitives'.[124]

A significant moment of transition in the British view of Byzantine culture had occurred two years prior to Curzon's text, however, with the writings of Scottish art historian/antiquarian Lord Alexander Lindsay (1812–1880), later 25th Earl of Crawford and 7th Earl of Balcarres, who began to thwart the dialogue on its perceived non-Aryan/Oriental rigidity, defectiveness and lifelessness.[125] Lord Lindsay's three-volume *Sketches in the History of Christian Art* (1847), which Martin Kemp has characterised as 'the main work of Hegelian art history published in Britain', charted the development of art and architecture as belonging to discrete stages, repositioning the Byzantine as the highest expression of Christian architecture, sculpture and painting prior to 1200.[126] Byzantine art was framed by Lindsay as 'early Christian' and thus situated as pre-dating and forming the foundation for western medieval art.[127]

Lindsay's writing – no less than the texts that were inspired similarly by German Idealism but which portrayed Byzantine art in a negative light – was also informed by Victorian theories of race and origin, but he saw in Byzantine works a creative synthesis of Oriental stasis and the Greek tradition, describing with relish the 'Oriental blazonry' of San Marco, which he described as 'the glory of Byzantine architecture

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124 Curzon's work influenced Ruskin, particularly his emphasis on the creativity of the medieval artist. Curzon described Byzantine buildings as 'small and clumsy' and thought it unnecessary to the study of ecclesiastical architecture to go 'beyond the shores of Italy'. Curzon, *Visits*, 25–33. For further discussion, see Cormack, 'A Gentleman's Book'; Nelson, *Hagia Sophia*, 53–4.

125 Lindsay, *Sketches*. Robert Nelson has described the substantial section on Byzantine architecture within Lindsay's book as beginning the process by which Byzantine art was incorporated into 'the canon of Western art'. Nelson, *Hagia Sophia*, 54–7. Nikolaos Karydis in his study of an earlier lecture by Charles Robert Cockerell, Pollen's uncle, on Byzantine architecture in England, delivered in 1843 at the Royal Academy sees similarities between this lecture and Lindsay's later sketches. Cockerell spoke against the prevailing Gothic style and advocated for the suitability of the Byzantine domed style in Anglican worship. Cockerell, 'The history of Christian architecture'; Karydis, 'Discovering the Byzantine art of building', 6–7.

126 Kemp, *The Desire of My Eyes*, 195; Crinson, *Empire Building*, 77–8; Steegman, 'Lord Lindsay's History; Barker et al., *A Poet in Paradise*; Brigstocke, *Lord Lindsay and the Sketches*. Ironically, Hegel himself did not hold Byzantine art in any esteem, only mentioning it in his *Lectures*, published posthumously in 1835. Knox, *Hegel's Aesthetics* II, 851.

127 Nelson, *Hagia Sophia*, 55.

West of the Adriatic'.[128] According to Lindsay, at the split of the Roman Empire, Byzantium had inherited the 'Contemplative' part of 'the original European character', and Rome the 'practical'. Byzantium accordingly took the lead in the 'three sister arts', including architecture, 'throughout the whole period of the dark ages, guarding it like a precious deposit, till the Romano-Teutonic race, the predestined heirs of ancient civilisation' were fully grown and 'ready to relieve them of their trust', beginning with Lombard architecture and the paintings of Giotto di Bondone (d. 1337).[129] In his overwhelmingly positive appraisal of Byzantine cultural outputs, Lindsay is fully aware that he is writing against the Enlightenment and specifically the Gibbonian sense of Byzantium, traditionally perceived 'as a race of dastards, effete and worn out in body and mind, bondsmen to tradition, form and circumstance, little if at all superior to the slaves of an Oriental despotism'.[130] According to Nelson, Lord Lindsay began for the British the process of deconstructing Gibbon's legacy and establishing instead a view of the Byzantines as 'heirs of ancient civilisation', allowing Byzantine art to 'enter the canon of western art'.[131]

Thomas Hope's earlier *Essay on Historical Architecture,* published posthumously in 1835, is often overlooked in terms of the reception of Byzantium in the British Isles, but it was clearly seminal for later histories, particularly those of Lindsay and Freeman. Like Lindsay, Hope was comfortable with the position that Byzantine architecture occupied, straddling the eastern and western worlds, claiming that 'the Greeks of Constantinople were the *arbitri elegantiarum* to the rest of the world, as those of Athens had been before. Hence also their new style of architecture was copied on every side', charting in the remainder of his text the seminal influence that Byzantine architecture played in the development of the architecture of medieval Europe, Russia and Islamic regions. For architectural writers influenced by Hope and Lindsay, like Matthew Digby Wyatt (1820–1877) and John Burley Waring (1823–1875) – who wrote on the Byzantine style in relation to the Byzantine and Romanesque court at the Crystal Palace in 1854 – the Byzantine became an intermediary early Christian architecture between Greco-Roman classicism and medieval Gothic. Leading British historian George Finlay (1799–1875) also attempted to reintegrate Byzantium into a historical European evolutionary continuum according to a

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128 Lindsay, *Sketches* I, 243–4.
129 Lindsay, *Sketches* I, 239–40.
130 Lindsay, *Sketches* I, 239.
131 Nelson, *Hagia Sophia*, 55. See Lindsay, *Sketches* I, 61.

Hegelian schema, but based mostly on its Greekness, bringing it back from being subsumed completely into the Oriental. In his books on the history of Greece, Finley stressed continuity from Antiquity into the Middle Ages, rather than rupture and decline, also challenging Gibbon's pervasive narrative.[132]

Pollen does not openly credit his sources or locate his inspiration concerning his understanding of the structural properties of Roman and Byzantine 'basilicas' in his article, and, indeed, he is openly criticised for not doing so in its review in *The Ecclesiologist*. Despite this, it is clear from his text that he is drawing in particular on the thought of figures like Lord Lindsay and Ruskin. He does not slavishly recount their ideas, however, but evidences innovative and critical arguments based on his own direct experience of the buildings themselves, and in places he contradicts or modifies their ideas.[133] Ironically, the only author he cites in his article is Gibbon, in relation to his understanding of how the dome of Hagia Sophia was strengthened by chains of iron. This is quite remarkable given the high esteem in which Pollen holds not only Byzantine architecture but also the early stages of the empire itself, particularly the 'rival capitals of Constantinople and Ravenna' which 'rose in importance as homes of art as well as seats of government' based on their inheritance from Rome.[134] Under the influence of Lindsay, and others who challenged the negative characterisation of Byzantium by Enlightenment writers, Pollen's design adopted a Romano-Byzantine model as an embodiment of the history of the early Church, 'as it gradually felt its way in the converted Empire, and took possession'. It provided in this way its own model of continuity from antiquity into the early Middle Ages, implicitly challenging the legacy of Gibbon's moralising history and the Enlightenment values that it enshrined.

John Ruskin's *The Stones of Venice*, published in three volumes between 1851–3, was seminal in elevating the Byzantine aesthetic in Britain under the influence of Lord Lindsay's new appraisal of Byzantine culture as the highest expression of Christian form prior to 1200.[135] Ruskin acknowledged in his earlier work *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*

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132 Finlay, *Greece under the Romans*; *History of the Byzantine Empire*.

133 For instance, he questions the received wisdom on the conversion of pagan basilicas to Christian usage, casting doubt on whether they were permanently converted into churches, while upholding the idea that they provided the model for early Christian churches. Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 129.

134 Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 133.

135 Ruskin himself discussed his debt to Lord Lindsay in a later commentary (*Works* 4, 348), and it was Ruskin who conducted a lengthy review of Lindsay's *Sketches* in the *Quarterly Review* ('Lord Lindsay on the history', 1–57) though he did criticise his 'triplicity' in terms of his view of Christian history. See Steegman, 'Lord Lindsay's Sketches', 123.

(1849) that his appraisal of Byzantine architecture as powerful and mysterious, by builders who had a 'truer sympathy with what God made majestic', was previously formulated by Lord Lindsay and not widely held.[136] Within *The Stones*, Byzantium's association with the East was largely characterised as a strength in the tradition of Lindsay, but he was certainly not consistent in this regard.[137] Ruskin's celebration of Byzantine architecture as the expression of religious feeling – expressed in his chapters on San Marco and the Byzantine palaces of the Veneto – also diverged from the Hegelian narratives that had dominated Victorian architectural theory.[138]

For Ruskin, who wrote exclusively on Venetian Byzantine architecture, Byzantium represented the antithesis to aesthetic ideals based on order – which evolved from Enlightenment values – and a new model for an architecture of religious feeling and awe instead, providing further seeds for those who would seek to use the Byzantine to signal the need for a revived Christianity in the face of rationalism and secularism.[139] The Byzantine was an architecture of power and sanctity, with Byzantium used in Ruskin's chapter on 'The Lamp of Power' in *The Seven Lamps*, wherein he connected its sustained use of colour to its integrity and purity.[140] Indeed, Ruskin claimed that anyone who had 'an eye for colour, and sympathy enough with Christianity to care for its fullest interpretation by Art' would agree with the positive assessment of the Byzantine architectural tradition that he and Lord Lindsay shared.[141] Religious purity, awe and the Byzantine aesthetic had been increasingly connected, but it was ultimately Ruskin who formalised and cemented this appreciation of the Byzantine in Britain, making it something

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136 Ruskin, *Works* 9, 120–1.
137 The Byzantine style was at times conflated positively with the Islamic, and at times differentiated from it, both positively and negatively. Ruskin vacillated from embracing the Oriental nature of the Byzantine style to feeling the need to distance it from Eastern decadence, a need perceived in his constant reassurances of the masculinity of the Venetian work and of the 'peculiar seriousness' of the 'Oriental' use of colour. Ruskin, *Works* 10, 176; 9, 15. For Ruskin, the highest ideal of art was response to the natural world and the arts of Islam and Byzantium were both liable to conventionalism and fancy, but at other points, Ruskin contended that the Byzantines, like the Lombards, were capable of submitting beauty to order in contrast to Islamic design. In other places still, he contrasted the symbolic staid formalism of the Byzantine with the fantastic evanescence of the Islamic. After *The Stones*, Ruskin qualified and distanced himself from his positive appraisal of Islamic architecture. For discussion, see Crinson, *Empire Building*, 81–7.
138 Kemp, *The Desire of my Eyes*, 195.
139 See Hewison, *Ruskin on Venice*. On the role of feeling in Ruskin's aesthetics, see, selectively, Landow, *The Aesthetic and Critical Theories*; Spuybroek, *The Sympathy of Things*, 197; Chandler, 'Feeling gothic'.
140 Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 125.
141 Ruskin, *Works* 9, 121.

distinctly Christian in essence and deftly disassociating it from denominational considerations.[142] Ruskin's passionate defence of the architectural polychromy and ornament in San Marco in *The Stones* was carefully disentangled from the Catholic rite practiced in the building in order to make his writings palatable within English Protestantism. Ruskin insisted that 'it must therefore be altogether without reference to its present usefulness, that we pursue our inquiry into the merits and meaning of the architecture of this marvellous building'.[143]

Ruskin, arguing for the validity of colour and ornament in ecclesiastical design, saw the Reformation as casting aside the arts of Rome while maintaining religion, and that secularism, which emerged first among the Rationalists of France, had kept the arts but thrown aside religion, resulting in the reification of the neoclassical in painting and architecture. According to Ruskin, 'The Protestant had despised the arts and the Rationalist corrupted them. But what has the Romanist done meanwhile?'[144] Newman and Pollen's church responded inherently to such ideas through the use of an early Christian aesthetic based on Roman and Byzantine forms as a refutation of both secular education (embodied in the Queen's universities) and Protestant hegemony and as a return to an affective space that used the arts to inculcate religious devotion.[145] Where others had read sensuousness and decadence in relation to the complete polychromatic decoration of the interior, Newman and Pollen, like Ruskin, had perceived poetry and affectivity. Newman recognised the power of the arts to inculcate religious devotion, and the church was intended as a site of transformation.[146] Ruskin's contribution in this regard was eventually consolidated and expanded upon in the

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142 This started with Hope's *An Historical Essay* and was followed by Lord Lindsay's work and Curzon's travelogue; both of these latter two figures, in particular, had a formative effect on Ruskin in this regard. See Kemp, *The Desire of my Eyes*, 195. See also Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 127; Nelson, *Hagia Sophia*, 68. On Ruskin's influence on others, see Hanley and Maidment, *Persistent Ruskin*; Eagles, *After Ruskin*.

143 Ruskin, *Works* 10, 89–92. See Clegg, *Ruskin and Venice*, 111–12; Kemp, *The Desire of my Eyes*, 182–3; Wheeler, *Ruskin's God*, 73–97; Nelson, *Hagia Sophia*, 67–8.

144 Ruskin, *Works* 9, 58.

145 It held synergies in this way with the wider attempt across Europe to move away from the objective appreciation of Immanuel Kant's disinterested viewer, part of the break away from Enlightenment thought. Whyte, 'Architecture and experience', 17–18, 27. On Victorian determination to inculcate certain behaviours and morality through architectural form and experience, see Weiner, *Architecture and Social Reform*.

146 For a good introduction to issues of agency and experience in relation to Victorian architecture, see Gillin and Joyce, *Experiencing Architecture*; Whyte, *Unlocking the Church*; 'Architecture and experience'. Whyte describes Ruskin's experience of architecture 'as a sort of epiphany'. Whyte, 'Architecture and experience', 17. On the relationship between architecture and emotion in the Victorian period more generally, see Burns, 'The awakening conscience'.

work of William Morris (1834–1896) and the Arts and Crafts movement towards the end of the century, which sought to advocate for the return of traditional craftsmanship and an affective architecture in the face of a rapidly evolving industrial Britain – a movement discussed in the final chapter.[147]

In the 1850s, just as Venetian-Byzantine architecture was gaining popularity owing to the writings of Ruskin, and as Byzantine studies were growing, Pollen situated the splendour and prestige of Byzantine churches in continuity with Rome through the Dublin church, in a homage to the early Christian basilican tradition. He saw the Emperor Constantine and his mother Helena as bringing the Roman basilican model to Constantinople and Palestine and transforming it by means of the dome, along with 'the elaboration of colour and detail'.[148] This can be connected to strands running through Ruskin's thought, who also aimed to connect Rome and Byzantium, saying:

> Christian art of the declining empire is divided into two great branches, western and eastern; one centred at Rome, the other at Byzantium, of which the one is the early Christian Romanesque, properly so called, and the other, carried to a higher imaginative perfection by Greek workmen, is distinguished from it as Byzantine. But I wish the reader, for the present, to class these two branches of art together in his mind, they being, in points of main importance, the same; that is to say, both of them a true continuance and sequence of the art of old Rome itself, flowing uninterruptedly down from the foundation head … elevated by Christianity to higher aims, and by the fancy of the Greek workmen endowed with brighter forms.[149]

Similarly, in the work of scholars like Lindsay, Salzenberg and others, Byzantine architectures – particularly works like Hagia Sophia – were treated as 'early Christian', with the early Christian covering a wide expanse from the fifth to the twelfth century and often connecting the Greco-Roman to the Gothic along with the Romanesque. The building in

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147 On William Lethaby's definition of architecture as 'building touched with emotion', for example, see Greensted, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, 44. On the Arts and Crafts movement in Britain more generally, where it dominated art and design at the end of the nineteenth century, see Greensted, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*; Livingstone and Parry, *International Arts and Crafts*, 38–144; Crawford, 'United Kingdom'; Naylor, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*; Powers, '1884'.
148 Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 133, 141.
149 Ruskin, *Works* 9, 36.

Dublin was not a confused mid-century amalgam of styles, but rather a considered expression of Christian architectural, sculptural and painted forms from across a swathe of history which was intended to convey the continuity of the triumphant Roman Church into the Middle Ages. The question of why Newman and Pollen wanted to visually articulate and emphasise the continuity of the triumphant Roman church into the Middle Ages and beyond is intricately connected to the dominance of Protestantism and secularism in the British Isles.

The Romano-Byzantine basilica, Gibbon and the continuity of the Catholic Church

The creation of a Romano-Byzantine church in its Dublin context was intended as a 'beautiful and imposing whole' that would emphasise continuity from patristic Rome, rather than hybridity. Newman and Pollen inherently undermined theories of rupture and decline through stressing continuity from the early church through the merging of early Christian and Byzantine forms with later art from Rome as an expression of early and medieval Christianity. This use of Roman and Byzantine forms to express the essence of Newman's Post-Enlightenment Catholic university was unavoidably a challenge to Gibbon's thought and influence, not necessarily directly but as it worked itself out in the writings of Protestant scholars.

Writing about the persecution faced by Catholics in England because of Protestantism (by which he meant the royal establishment, those who were 'heirs of the Traditions of Elizabeth'), Newman discussed the foundational notion upon which the rejection of Catholicism and the mistreatment of Catholics rested:

> … that Christianity was very pure in its beginning, was very corrupt in the middle age, and is very pure in England now, though still corrupt everywhere else: that in the middle age, a tyrannical institution, called the Church, arose and swallowed up Christianity, and that that Church is alive still, and has not yet disgorged its prey … in the middle age there was no Christianity anywhere at all, but all was dark and horrible, as bad as paganism, or rather much worse.[150]

150 Newman, *Present Position of Catholics*, 12–13. This idea is discussed also in Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Doctrine*, 10.

Newman accuses Protestantism of dropping 'a thousand years from the world's chronicle' because of this, leading to the two defining characteristics of Protestantism as he perceives them: 'its want of past history, and its want of fixed teaching'.[151] Indeed, in *An Essay on the Development of Doctrine* (1845) (henceforth *Development of Doctrine*), published in the year he converted to Catholicism, Newman refers to the 'utter incongruity between Protestantism and historical Christianity' as being 'plain fact'.[152] For Newman, historical continuity was the preserve of the Catholic, and 'to be deep in history is to cease to be a Protestant'.[153]

According to Newman, Protestant disavowal of the medieval church led to a most unfortunate lack of scholarship in England on ecclesiastical history to the point where 'the only English writer who has any claim to be considered an ecclesiastical historian, is the unbeliever Gibbon'.[154] Indeed, Gibbon's characterisation of the deficiencies of the early Church provided a fitting model for Protestants who were concerned to demarcate when the Church ceased to be 'pure' and became corrupt, marking the point of rupture between true Christianity and its debased medieval Catholic form. It was Newman's eventual rejection of this model that precipitated his conversion, a conviction articulated in full in his *Development of Doctrine* which demonstrated how key elements of belief had evolved over time while maintaining their essence and integrity, without the Church ever contradicting 'her own enunciations' – Newman's accretive understanding of doctrine.[155] History, particularly the history of the early and medieval church, was integral to Catholic identity and proving consistency and continuity, while allowing for issues of change and corruption, from the early Church, through the middle ages, to the church of the nineteenth century was key to Newman's defence of 'Catholicity and Revelation' – one of the main objectives of his university. In this he was unavoidably responding to the legacy of Gibbon as it worked itself out in the British Isles.

Newman sustained a complex and intriguing engagement with Gibbon for the duration of his adult life, described recently as an

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151 Newman, *Lectures on the Present Position*, 43, 58.
152 Newman, *An Essay on the Development*, 8.
153 Newman, *An Essay on the Development*, 8. The Oxford Movement had argued for apostolic succession and had favoured a pre-Reformation architectural style because of this. See Hall, 'What do Victorian churches mean?', 78. Some within the movement eventually converted to Roman Catholicism because of this and their resultant high ecclesiology which placed greater esteem on the visible church and sacramentality, discussed further in Chapter 4.
154 Newman, *An Essay on the Development*, 8.
155 Newman, *An Essay on the Development*, 120.

'admiring, if troubled, relationship'.[156] On the centenary of Gibbon's death in 1894, Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff (1829–1906), the president of the Royal Historical Society, mentioned Newman's sustained interest in Gibbon, saying in the *Proceedings of the Gibbon Commemoration 1794–1894* that, 'as I know from one who conversed with him on the subject near the end of his life, [he] retained to the last the profoundest respect for the author of the "Decline and Fall"'.[157] Indeed, Gibbon and Newman held a great deal in common and their scholarly subject matter overlapped in terms of the study of the early Church – yet Newman approached this as a theologian, and Gibbon as a historian.[158] The conclusions that they reached were correspondingly different, particularly on the rise and development of the Church which Gibbon attributed to natural causes, while Newman gave space to the role of Providence.[159] Although Gibbon put forward a seminal anti-Catholicism through his purportedly objective account of the history of Catholic misdeeds, Newman praised Gibbon for his historical ability.[160]

Newman was enamoured more than anything by Gibbon's style of writing. He admitted his deeply felt admiration for Gibbon's abilities, even to his Catholic audience in Dublin:

> You must not suppose I am going to recommend his style for imitation, any more than his principles; but I refer to him as the example of a writer feeling the task which lay before him, feeling that he had to bring into words for the comprehension of his readers a great and complicated scene, and wishing that those words should be adequate to his understanding.[161]

When he discusses Gibbon's writing style, Newman seems animated, admitting that, in his youth, he was not only enamoured by Gibbon's style but that he emulated it, saying 'I fell in with the twelfth volume of Gibbon, and my ears rang with the cadences of his sentences, and I dreamed of it for a night or two. Then I began to make an analysis of

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156 Young, *The Victorian Eighteenth Century*, 9. Gibbon features across Newman's writings. See, for example, Newman, *An Essay on the Development*, 44, 91, 198, 364; *The Idea of the University* (hereafter *Idea*), 95, 196, 211, 285, 309, 313, 322.

157 Royal Historical Society, *Proceedings of the Gibbon Commemoration*, 16. Discussed in Young, 'Gibbon, Newman', 71–2.

158 On the many similarities between the two figures, see Young, 'Gibbon, Newman', 73.

159 Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, §15.

160 Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, §15 and 16; Newman, *An Essay on the Development*, 7–9. Newman discusses Gibbon's godless intellectualism in *Idea*, 196–7.

161 *Idea*, 285.

Thucydides in Gibbon's style'.[162] He went further in his personal correspondence, exclaiming in an earlier letter to John William Bowden in October of 1819 that 'no style is left for historians of an after day. O who is worthy to succeed our Gibbon!'[163]

Newman appreciated Gibbon's excellent mind but took issue of course with his unbelief and the 'scoffing' spirit that underpinned his approach to the history of the church. In his later work on religious epistemology, *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent* (1870), Newman used Gibbon as representative of those who assign natural origins to the rise of Christianity and structured his rebuttal of such beliefs through addressing Gibbon's five human causes.[164] Overall, however, it seems that Newman had less of an issue with Gibbon himself than he did with Protestant authors who admired Gibbon's work on the early imperial church, particularly Henry Hart Milman (1791–1868), liberal Anglican clergyman and professor of poetry at Oxford when Newman was a young fellow at Oriel. In his review of the opening stages of Milman's three-volume *History of Latin Christianity* (1841), Newman begins by noting the unavoidable and unfortunate debt to Gibbon in such English scholarship on the early Church, saying, 'It is notorious that the English Church is destitute of an Ecclesiastical History; Gibbon is almost our sole authority for subjects as near the heart of a Christian as any can well be.'[165]

Milman was widely known to have admired Gibbon's work, having published an edition of *Decline and Fall* in 1838 and a biography of Gibbon the following year.[166] Newman's issue was with clergymen like Milman who should do better regarding ecclesiastical history, taking exception in particular to his claim to write as a historian, rather than in his role as a religious instructor, on the history of Christianity as a social and political phenomenon. Newman pointed to the impossibility of such neutrality on the topic and to the difficulties of suspending Christian claims to

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162 *Idea*, 322.

163 *Letters and Diaries* 1, 67.

164 Newman, *An Essay in Aid of*, 457–63. At the opening of Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, §15, Gibbon dismisses revelation and supernatural interpretations of the development of Christianity as being anti-historical.

165 Newman, 'Milman's View of Christianity' was first published in the *British Critic* in 1841 and republished in *Essays Critical and Historical* II in 1871 during Newman's Catholic period. Many others disagreed with Newman's appraisal of Milman's work such as the historian Lecky, who considered Milman's *History of Latin Christianity* to have given 'its author indisputably the first place among the ecclesiastical historians of England'. Lecky, *Historical and Political Essays*, 264.

166 On Milman's admiration of Gibbon, see Forbes, *The Liberal Anglican Idea*, 2, 116; McCloy, *Gibbon's Antagonism*, 316–23.

revelation which merely allowed them to dissipate. Newman regretted Milman's 'external contemplation' or worldly account of Christianity which ignored the role of God's Providence in the development of ecclesiastical history.[167] In an earlier letter in which he discussed Milman's *History of the Jews* (1829), Newman observed:

> … the great evil of Milman's work lies not in the manner of the history, but in the prophane spirit in which it is written … In most of his positions I agree with him but abhor the irreverent scoffing Gibbon-like tone of the composition.[168]

In his review of Milman's later *History of Latin Christianity*, however, Newman went further, to criticise Milman's methodology itself:

> It is impossible then to mistake the satisfaction which he feels in adopting the external view of Christianity, and the sort of contempt, we are sorry to say it, in which he holds theological science.[169]

For Newman, reason could only take one so far, and faith was needed for its perfection; or rather the correct application of reason would lead one to faith. At the heart of Newman's critique was disdain for the insidious form of religious rationalism that had crept into the English Church to act as final arbiter since the English Reformation, under the influence of figures such as Enlightenment philosopher and unofficial 'Father of Liberalism', John Locke (1632–1704). Newman perceived of Liberalism as the ground where Protestantism and secularism most closely intersected.[170] Indeed, Cyril O'Regan has recently argued that in *Development of Doctrine*, Newman was ultimately arguing against religious rationalists like Milman whose historical sense had been derived from reading Gibbon, and that in doing so Newman resorted to a quasi-rationalist mode of argumentation himself in order to tilt the balance in favour of the 'intelligibility of a developing tradition', in a manner that is 'sufficiently naturalistic so as to meet the objections raised by a

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167 Newman, 'Milman's view of Christianity', 186–7, 202.
168 Letter to Simeon Lloyd Pope, 28 October 1830. *Letters and Diaries* 2, 299.
169 Newman, 'Milman's view of Christianity', 207.
170 Frank Turner has argued that evangelicals were Newman's ultimate target. See Turner, *John Henry Newman*. Cyril O'Regan argues, however, that although Newman perceived all three strands of Protestantism within the Church of England to believe in the greater purity of the early Church, he ultimately saw liberals as most insidiously opposed to Catholic tradition and the magisterium. Rational religion was always Newman's chief opponent in rejecting both the authority of scripture and doctrine. O'Regan, 'Newman's forensic classic', 237.

critical-rationalist historiography that sets aside reference to revelation and providence'.[171] O'Regan opts to describe Newman's approach in the text as forensic rather than rationalistic, aimed at deconstructing – by means of a more Gibbonian, naturalistic argument – the history of decline in relation to Catholic Christianity of the medieval period which had been based on Gibbon's historiographical method, if not his claims directly.[172]

This triad, composed of two contemporary authors and one deceased, converged on one seminal issue – the role of the supernatural, particularly the miraculous, in early ecclesiastical history. Milman would have been pleased for Gibbon to tear apart the miracles reported in the post-Apostolic age, which Newman defended, 'if he had left uninjured by sarcastic insinuation those of the New Testament'.[173] Although an admirer of Gibbon, Milman wished to rectify Gibbon's omission of the apostolic age from his history and his 'purely natural explanation for the growth of Christianity', articulated in the first volume of *Decline and Fall*. However, Milman was content to align himself with Gibbon's criticism of Christianity's transformation into an imperial/political religion and the medieval church that followed, precisely the periods of ecclesiastical history that Newman wished to maintain after his conversion to Catholicism.[174] The dispute was by no means one-sided, and Milman lamented Newman's defence of 'medieval Christianity' in his reciprocal review of Newman's *Development of Doctrine* in 1846, saying 'From the beginning of the fifth to the opening, at the earliest, of the twelfth century … is the age of the most total barrenness of the human mind, of the most unbroken slumber of human thought, of the utmost cruelty, and must we not add, licentiousness of manners.'[175] This was primarily the period of history that Newman and Pollen reclaimed and elevated through the design of their Romano-Byzantine church, materially and visually rebutting claims of rupture and decline and speaking to the triumph of early Christianity in a hostile world, which held analogous interest for their Catholic university.

171 O'Regan, 'Newman's forensic classic', 230.
172 O'Regan, 'Newman's forensic classic', 230–2. The irony is of course that the reception of New-man's *Essay on the Development of Doctrine* was mixed, particularly in Catholic Rome when he moved there following conversion, and that Newman has himself been accused of being overly modernist and liberal in it, drawing too much on reason over theological arguments. See, selectively, Kerr, *John Henry Newman*, 257–315; Lash, *Newman and Development*; McCar-ren, 'Development in doctrine'; Nichols, *From Newman to Congar*, 17–70.
173 Milman (ed.), *The History of the Decline and Fall* (Gibbon) I: xix, xxi.
174 Milman, *The Character and Conduct of the Apostles*, 1. For discussion, see Young, 'Gibbon, Newman', 81.
175 Milman, 'Newman on the development', 427, 447.

Newman's perception of the Catholic university was deeply connected to his defence of Catholicity and Revelation more generally, at the heart of which was the issue of historical continuity and sacred development, articulated fully in *Development of Doctrine*. This work of apologetics received a mixed reception at the time among Catholic thinkers but was deeply formative for Newman's understanding of the cogency of a dynamically evolving tradition for the duration of his life.[176] To be Catholic, for Newman, was to embrace the historical evolution of the Christian truths that had been entrusted to the care and preservation of the Church of Rome. Newman's contention was that the established Protestant church in England had embraced the 'truth' that contemporary Catholicism was not a pure descendent of the early Church but rather a corrupted offshoot.[177] Correspondingly, his implicit objective in both *Development of Doctrine* and in University Church was to emphasise sacred continuity and refute notions of rupture.

In *Development of Doctrine*, Newman articulated seven tests to demonstrate the legitimate development of tradition, the first and most important of which was the preservation of type – providing proof that modern Catholicism preserved the type of original Christianity. University Church was a material embodiment of the preservation of type through its channelling of an early Christian basilica to create something inherently modern and suited to the needs of the university. Speaking of Pugin's Gothic, in a letter to one of Pugin's supporters, Newman stressed the inadequacy of architectural styles that were merely disentombed from the past, where they had served the needs of the medieval church. Accordingly, the Dublin church was no medieval replica but a beautiful and complex response to the basilicas of Italy, because the Church, as Newman said:

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176 Frank Turner puts forward a different reading of the importance of *An Essay on the Development of Doctrine*: he discusses at length the complications of the text, the critical response it received, the lack of influence it exerted in his lifetime, and he questions whether the idea of development in it did in fact play a seminal role in his conversion. Turner, *John Henry Newman*, 527–86. The unenthusiastic response to his work particularly in Rome is well documented, but Newman stood by his understanding of the development of Christianity as an 'idea' and did rework the arguments of *Development of Doctrine* across different writings during the course of his lifetime, particularly in relation to the argument around papal infallibility in 1868, when Newman felt it was being used against its original purpose by ultramontanists. *Letters and Diaries* 25, 58. In his *Certain Difficulties* of 1850, 396, he asserted that he could not convey to another 'the force of this, to me ineffably cogent argument'. See also *Letters and Diaries*: 22, 149. Indeed, he began restructuring *Development of Doctrine* in 1877 for republication without changing his argument in any major way. *Letters and Diaries* 28, 247. Later in life, he still saw this essay as one of his five most significant works. See Ker, *John Henry Newman*, 314, 636; Ker 'Newman's theory'; Chadwick, *From Bousset to Newman*, 157–60.

177 O'Regan, 'Newman's forensic classic', 229.

> … while one and the same in doctrine ever, is ever modifying,
> adapting, varying her discipline and ritual, according to the times …
> in order that any style of architecture should exactly suit the living
> ritual of the 19th century, it should be the living architecture of the
> 19th century.[178]

The clear resonances between Newman's understanding of Catholicity,
articulated in works like *Development of Doctrine*, and University Church
may be understood of course as indirect and implicit, but also inevitable:
the thought, articulated so cogently in Newman's seminal work written
at the point of conversion, which explicates a large part of his decision to
go over to Catholicism, underpinned many aspects of his faith and work
thereafter, including his vision for the university, his views on architec-
ture and thus the decisions taken over the building and decoration of
University Church. This was informed by and realised through Pollen's
aesthetic input, which is discussed in more detail in the following
chapter. Newman's understanding of the desirability of a living archi-
tecture to meet the needs of the present seems to have been realised in
University Church.

In terms of the affective space that Newman required to connect the
university to the authority of Rome through history and to bring before
the public its significance – this beautiful and imposing whole – his letters
to Pollen and others give insight into his overall vision. Writing to Stanton
on 24 February 1853, he said, 'Part of my plan, if I have my way, is to have
a rather magnificent ceremonial; good preachers, confraternities etc.
and I wish to get them hot from Rome.'[179] Discussing the academic dress
that he required for use in the space in a later letter to Stanton, he said,
'I want the whole imposing' with 'thrones, pulpits etc. all very grand'.[180]
His vision – in keeping with his Oratorian outlook through which he saw
the splendour of both the arts and the liturgy as spurring souls onwards
towards God – was for an impressive edifice and ceremonial that would
resonate with the glories of Rome to confer legitimacy on the new
university.[181] Newman knew he was operating in a hostile environment,
and he required a visual language that would make the 'show' that he
deemed necessary to elevating Catholic education, belief and society.
In his polemic discussion of the persecution of Catholics in England,

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178 Letter to Ambrose Lisle Phillipps, 15 June 1848, *Letters and Diaries* 12, 221.
179 24 February 1853. *Letters and Diaries* 15, 311.
180 12 March 1854. *Letters and Diaries* 16, 83.
181 On Newman's Oratorian ethos and aesthetics in relation to the liturgy, see Nicholls, *Unearthly Beauty*, esp. 207.

Newman asserted that Catholics had recourse to one action only in the face of systemic social and political oppression: 'Your one and almost sole object, I say, must be, to make yourselves known. This is what will do everything for you.'[182]

Protestant persecution was at the forefront of Newman's mind with the founding of the Catholic university. In an address given by Newman to his students on 5 November 1854, subsequently described by the editor Robert Ornsby in the *Catholic University Gazette* on 1 February 1855, Newman stated that 'the Catholics of this country, and all speaking the English language, should have the means afforded to them of that higher education which hitherto the Protestants had monopolised'.[183] Even prior to his appointment, Newman had inveighed against the logical inconsistency of asserting that religion and education should not be conceived of separately in Protestant England, but not affording the same privilege to Catholics in Ireland with reference to the secular Queen's universities.[184] He drew a direct parallel between the Irish and early Christian contexts in relation to this repression in his first discourse delivered before the opening of the university, comparing students of the godless Queen's Colleges to the early Christians who were permitted to study alongside pagans by the Church Fathers because nothing better was available, suggesting that just as the Church had found its societal place, so too would Catholics in Britain and Ireland with the founding of the Catholic university.[185]

For Newman, University Church had very important practical purposes, but it also held deeply symbolic ones in representing the university. Its pragmatism and use of a Romano-Byzantine revival style to indicate new direction and hope for the present by means of analogy with the past resonates with the wider revival of basilicas with Byzantinising decorative features, such as those in Bavaria and Prussia. The architectural type was chosen to create an imposing edifice with modest means that would be primarily experienced from its interior to facilitate the impressive ritual that Newman required, creating through visual analogy a link back to the early Church and the legitimacy it assumed following the Edict of Milan (313) when Christianity was legalised. The structure and style conveyed a clear message: just as the early Church asserted its place in the pagan Roman Empire and continued

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182 Newman, *Lecture on the Present Position*, 373.
183 *Letters and Diaries* 16, 564. He reiterates this concept in the preface of *Idea*.
184 *Idea*, xiv.
185 *Idea*, 9–10.

successfully into the medieval period to the present day, so too would the university in its hostile Post-Enlightenment and Protestant world and within its Irish context.

The basilica was a built type which 'presented outwardly nothing but a close bare wall' according to Thomas Hope, but it lent itself to excellence in its interior where the sacred mysteries were celebrated.[186] Echoing these sentiments, Pollen asserted that the builders of basilicas 'had no sort of intention of challenging critics in their exteriors. They contemplated art in their interior only. This was by a system of decorative incrustation'.[187] In dealing with the limitations of site and budget that faced them, Ruskin's primary characteristic with which he defined Byzantine architecture offered a perfect solution for Newman and Pollen: its 'confessed incrustation' – the sheathing of inexpensive structural mediums such as brick with precious marbles and mosaics. In this both Ruskin and Pollen, who devotes a significant portion of his article to the principle of incrustation, were ultimately indebted to Lord Lindsay who had celebrated the Byzantine design of San Marco as being 'completely incrusted with mosaics; the lower walls are lined with precious marbles'.[188] It was an aesthetic method that lent itself to excellence in colour and surface. Indeed, for Ruskin 'the school of incrusted architecture' was 'the only one in which perfect and permanent chromatic decoration is possible'.[189] The result of Newman and Pollen's choices based on practical limitations and their awareness of the ideological implications of style was an architecture of the interior, dependent for its affectivity on its paintings and marbles.

The aisleless basilica was most fitting in terms of financial and spatial constraints, and the practical requirements of the university, but it also necessitated an 'interior' form of architecture that privileged colour, texture and symbolic pictorial representation in order to lead the mind to higher contemplation – emphases that prevailed in early Christian and Byzantine churches. Pollen asserted that the basilica was the most appropriate structure for persuasively displaying the beautiful Irish 'marbles' that constituted the greatest cost incurred by the project. Function predominated over form, but form and decoration were inextricably connected to the purpose of this space which Newman perceived as being at the heart of 'the intellectual, moral and religious

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186 Hope, *An Historical Essay* I, 86.
187 Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 140.
188 Lindsay, *Sketches* I, 66.
189 Ruskin, *Works* 10, 93, 98. For a consideration of Ruskin, architecture and surface with a focus on gender, see Chatterjee, *John Ruskin*.

training of the youth of Ireland', his first priority conceived when he accepted the role and one of the few parts of the university completed as envisaged.[190] The conception was Newman's, but the execution belonged to Pollen, for whom colour and image were key interests and strengths.

190 Newman, *My Campaign* I, 290.

3

An architecture of the interior: a colourful and affective analogy

Symbolism and affectivity assumed increased importance in Victorian ecclesiastical design from the 1830s, as church buildings became imbricated in the defence of Christian belief and points of doctrine in the face of growing secularism and denominational disputes.[1] As a result, and despite its often perceived connections to the Oriental East, colour came to assume greater importance in architectural theory from the 1840s, with the influential Anglo-Catholic architectural journal *The Ecclesiologist* advocating for colour in Gothic revival design, saying, 'We would have every inch glowing'.[2] There was continued resistance outside of the Anglo-Catholic revival movement to the use of colour in architecture both structurally, through the choice and arrangement of construction materials, and by means of the application of tiles, painting, stained glass and mosaic.[3] Colour, sensuousness, Papism and Orientalism continued to be conflated in various permutations for many Victorians, despite advocacy among Gothic revivalists for the use of polychrome.

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1   Robert Kerr, founding member of the Architectural Association, later credited Ruskin with increasing appreciation of the emotional/affective experience of architecture. See Wheeler, 'They cannot choose but look'. On the increasing use of art to release religious feelings, from the late 1830s onwards particularly, see Burns, 'The awakening conscience'. On Victorian churches and symbolism/sacramentalism, see Hall, 'What do Victorian churches mean?'. On increased symbolism in architecture of the 1830s and 1840s, see Whyte, *Unlocking the Church*, 31–9. Symbolism in church architecture was particularly appreciated by the Cambridge Camden Society and the Oxford Architectural Society. See Bremner, *Imperial Gothic*, 185, for further discussion and bibliography. For a discussion of Victorian architecture as communicative and affective, see Whyte, *Unlocking the Church*, 92.
2   'On decorative colour', 1845, 199–203; 200–1, quoted and discussed in Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 138. On Victorian architecture as 'a vivid and colourful architecture of affect', see Whyte, *Unlocking the Church*, 83.
3   See, for example, Cheshire, *Stained Glass*.

But by the 1850s, colour was being used increasingly, and many designers and theoreticians looked not only to the continent but further east for inspiration.[4] By the 1860s, colour was being used widely in churches.[5]

Figures such as Pugin and Ruskin were at the centre of the debate concerning architectural polychromy.[6] Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) and *The Stones of Venice* (1851–3) are often seen as having been particularly formative in relation to the use of colour in buildings.[7] It was colour and ornamentation that sustained Ruskin's fascination with the Byzantine buildings of the Veneto, particularly San Marco, dedicated in 1094 and decorated slowly thereafter, the west front of which he described in *The Seven Lamps* as 'a piece of rich and fantastic colour, as lovely a dream as ever filled human imagination', despite its imperfections.[8] He described with relish the effects of San Marco as a whole as depending on 'the most delicate sculpture in every part but … eminently colour'.[9] For Ruskin, colour spoke to nature and life, and aided in producing awe and thus potentially morality in viewers. In order to achieve the beautiful and imposing whole that Newman required – as a convincing manifestation of the university within the limitations of site and cost – Pollen, who saw colour as the defining feature of the basilican tradition, looked to early Christian Rome and his experiences of the buildings of the former Byzantine Empire, particularly those of Ravenna, but also those influenced by Byzantine design in Venice, in order to use colour, light and texture to create an affective interior.[10]

Pollen did not aim at a slavish imitation of Roman and Byzantine basilicas, but rather a building that was Romano-Byzantine in essence,

4   The use of colour in All Saints' Church, Margaret Street, London, and in Keble College, Oxford, for example, left their designers open to accusations of Popery. Thompson, 'All Saints' Church'.

5   On the development of architectural polychromy, see Jackson, 'Clarity or camouflage'; Whelan, 'George Gilbert Scott'; Curl, *Victorian Architecture*, 37.

6   See Schultheiss, *Like an Ancient Shrine*, 110–24. Pugin may have been the first to articulate the idea of complete design and the importance of polychromy as he articulated his ideas concerning the superiority of medieval Catholic architecture. See Durbin, *Architectural Tiles*, 10.

7   The extent of Ruskin's influence in Victorian architecture from the mid-nineteenth century is still open to debate, and it is increasingly argued that his complex but poetic writings may have been used more as a helpful defence of architectural innovation rather than as a pattern book.

8   Ruskin, *Works* 8, 206. Ruskin was particularly fascinated by Byzantine 'purple' and spoke about it in his published books and private notebooks and diaries. See Wheeler, 'Byzantine "purple"'. On the dating issues in relation to San Marco, see James, *Mosaics*, 5, 146, 343, 348, 371.

9   Ruskin, *Works* 10, 115.

10   On Ravenna as 'the Western bride of the Eastern Caesars', see Lindsay, *Sketches* I, 267. See also Hope, *An Historical Essay* I, 135.

adapted to its context: the whirling spectacle of coloured 'marble' surfaces, gilded lattice work, paintings and carefully controlled light was intended, in the true spirit of Byzantine architecture, as what Newman referred to as 'a foretaste of heaven' on earth.[11] Indeed, Ruskin's description of the beautiful effects achieved in San Marco by means of 'the most subtle, variable, inexpressible colour in the world – the colour of glass, of transparent alabaster, of polished marble, and lustrous gold', could just as easily sum up the effect that Pollen was hoping to achieve in Dublin.[12] The Romano-Byzantine structure, sheathed internally with the sumptuous polychrome of the church's decoration, is discussed in this chapter against the backdrop of Pollen's travels and writings, his appreciation and modification of Ruskin's thought, and the related influence of the Museum Building at Trinity College Dublin, which was under construction when Pollen arrived in Dublin. Pollen's melodious and sustained use of polychrome across the surfaces of the basilica created a colourful and affective analogy through which the Dublin church was persuasively connected to the early Church.

The Byzantinising columns of the antechapel

The impressive effect achieved within the Dublin church owed to a delicate balance of colour harmonies, created largely through the stunning Irish 'marbles', or polished limestones, that dominate the interior. The porch was built in the years following Newman's departure when funds were available in 1860, with its façade continuing the Byzantinising aesthetic of the interior by means of its polychromatic brickwork, double convex capitals with sharply cut, low-relief foliage designs (albeit with symbols of the evangelists), and its use of the round arch. The dark antechapel, that dramatically frames the bright, colourful space of the nave beyond, was part of the original design (Figure 1.1). Monolithic columns of light and dark 'marbles' from counties Armagh, Offaly and Kilkenny support a large gallery above the antechapel which extends 46 ft (14 m) into the church. A row of eight thin columns of alternating black and brown shafts surmounted by carved alabaster capitals, featuring Irish flora

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11 Newman refers in his writings to the earthly service in this manner in *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent*, 488. The *topos* of the church as an experience of heaven on earth recurs in Byzantine literary sources. The eighth-century Patriarch of Constantinople Germanos famously said, in his exegesis of the liturgy, that 'The church is an earthly heaven in which the celestial God dwells and walks'. Ἐκκλησία ἐστὶν ἐπίγειος οὐρανός, ἐν ᾧ ὁ ἐπουράνιος Θεὸς ἐνοικεῖ καὶ ἐμπεριπατεῖ. Germanos of Constantinople, *On the Divine Liturgy*, 56.

12 Ruskin, *Works* 10, 115.

such as oak leaves and clover (Figure 1.1), support seven tall, 'elliptical' arches that immediately frame the view towards the apse; the outermost columns are engaged to the lateral walls of the church, but the inner six are freestanding.[13]

Roman columns springing into a round-arched arcade like these were considered a defining characteristic of both the early Christian and Byzantine traditions by Victorian writers, but those with arcades based on a stilted or elliptical, rather than semicircular, arch were considered specifically Byzantine.[14] For Freeman, it was the stilted arch that differentiated the Byzantine from the basilican style.[15] Indeed, the noticeably high and narrow proportions of the arcades throughout the church, with delicate roundels decorating the spandrels, is very similar to the thirteenth-century Venetian palazzo, known as the Fondaco de'Turchi since the seventeenth century, the elevation of which was drawn and celebrated as the epitome of the 'Byzantine palace' by Ruskin – a type he defined as having continuous 'arcades borne by marble shafts and walls of brick faced with marble', along with perfection in the form and variety of capitals.[16] The proportions of the stilted arches are also somewhat similar to those of the elevation drawn up by Joseph-Louis Duc for Newman's permanent Oratory church in Birmingham, which was to be an adapted basilica also, but which was never realised. Pollen would not have had access to those drawings, but Newman may have discussed them with him, and this may also have played a role in the choice.[17]

Preceding this row are four thicker freestanding columns, three black and one brown. Their alabaster capitals comprise sharply stylised

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13 On the 'elliptical' shape of the arches, see Pollen, 'Lecture VI', 379.
14 See, for example, Wyatt and Waring, *The Byzantine and Romanesque*, 20; Freeman, *A History*, 158. 'Letters to a lady, embodying a popular sketch of the history of architecture, and the characteristics of the various styles which have prevailed, no. X', *The Builder*, 389, defined the Byzantine style in terms of semi-circular arcades, the cupola and large flat surfaces that led to 'walls coated in marbles', 'cupolas plated with gold' and excellence in mosaic. Articles in *The Builder* frequently refer to columns with superimposed arches as a distinctly Byzantine feature. See, for example, 'Notes of an architect in Spain', *The Builder* 10 (17 January 1852), 38.
15 Freeman, *A History*, 172. Hope, *An Historical Essay* I, 131, speaks on the stilted arch arcade as specifically Byzantine and Freeman drew considerably on Hope's thought.
16 See Ruskin, *Works* 10, 146–8, fig. 4. See 10, 277 on its capitals.
17 O'Donnell, 'Louis Joseph Duc'. Guy Nicholls suggests that the stilted nature of the arches may have arisen from Newman's admiration for basilican buildings with 'a smack of the moorish and gothic', discussed in relation to his plans for his Oratorian church in Birmingham, and that Newman may have picked up this appreciation during his visit to Sicily in 1833, particularly from the arches in the Cappella Palatina at Palermo. See *Letters and Diaries* 14, 290 and Nicholls, *Unearthly Beauty*, 261–2. The close similarity with Ruskin's drawing of the Fondaco and Pollen's familiarity with *The Stones* suggests that this may have provided the immediate model.

Figure 3.1   University Church, Dublin. Capital from the antechapel with leaf carving in the Byzantine style. © Niamh Bhalla

Figure 3.2   Basilica of San Marco, Venice, dedicated 1094. Main portal of the west façade. © Guillem Lopez/Alamy Stock Photo

foliage in the Byzantine manner (Figure 3.1): indeed, they are similar to some of the capitals in San Vitale in Ravenna.[18] They also resemble Ruskin's diagrams of various Byzantine 'convex' or cushion capitals in *The Stones of Venice*, published immediately before the church was built,

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18   At San Vitale a leaf pattern that is very similar to the columns of the antechapel at University Church appears on the sides of the upper capital of the double capital columns in the presbytery.

and these may have provided a source of inspiration, along with Pollen's direct observations in Italy.[19] The Byzantine capital was often considered the crowning achievement of the style by Victorian writers appreciative of the tradition, described by Thomas Hope as 'square blocks tapered downwards … and adorned either with foliage in low relief, or with a sort of basket work'.[20] Matthew Digby Wyatt and John Burley Waring wrote at length on the characteristics of the Byzantine style in their attempt to elevate perceptions of it, in relation to the Byzantine and Romanesque court at the Crystal Palace in 1854. They too described the appearance of the Byzantine cushion capital in terms of its evolution from its Roman model: 'The foliage of the acanthus, although imitated from the antique, quite changed its character, becoming more geometrical and conventional in its form'.[21] Ruskin devoted a great amount of space in *The Stones* to the arch and supporting capitals of Byzantine architecture as chief determiners of the style, and he characterised the capital by means of its cut-leaf design and superior homage to nature compared to its classical precedents.[22]

Clearly drawing on Ruskin's ideas, Pollen describes the convex Byzantine cushion capital as having been based on the concave acanthus leaf capital of classical antiquity, differentiated from it by 'a greater desire to appreciate its natural beauty, and with a certain delight in observing the fresh joyousness of living vegetation, blown by winds and clinging round the convex mass'.[23] Following the decline of the classical tradition, Pollen saw the 'Easterns' as far exceeding the West in the design of the capital, and thus Byzantine churches as 'the best field' for study of the capital. He celebrates the capitals of Ravenna and Constantinople in particular, as having an original character of their own which was 'sharp, severely controlled but not wanting in vigour or grace'.[24]

The famous west front of San Marco, praised so influentially by Ruskin, included an array of colourful marble columns surmounted by varied capitals in lighter stone in a manner comparable to what we find inside the Dublin church (Figure 3.2, previous page). The earlier churches of Ravenna and the interior of Hagia Sophia also included sumptuous pillars of 'variously coloured marbles' with white stone capitals.[25]

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19 Ruskin, *Works* 10, 158, plate 7.
20 Hope, *An Historical Essay* I, 122.
21 Wyatt and Waring, *The Byzantine and Romanesque*, 21.
22 Ruskin, *Works* 10, 155 onwards. See also Kotoula, 'Arts and Crafts', 88–9; Kotoula, 'A piece of nature'.
23 Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 134.
24 Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 140–1.
25 Discussed in Fergusson, *The Illustrated Handbook* II, 951.

Pollen saw such combinations of white stone capitals with monolithic shafts of variously coloured marbles as one of the defining features of the basilican tradition.[26] Indeed, he saw San Marco as being a later and magnificent preservation of the basilican type after so many ages – 'a wonderful exponent of their principles' – and his particular admiration of its 'columns of marble in all colours, the archivolts being of sculptured white marble' evidently informed the design of the shafts and capitals at University Church.[27] The darker space of the antechapel filled with these coloured columns and alabaster capitals sculpted with identifiable Irish flora and Byzantine designs facilitated a poignant transition from the mundane world of the Dublin street into the bright space of marble and pseudo-mosaic in the nave, wherein viewers were further reminded of the glories of the early Christian empire.

The colourful walls of the nave

Along with impressive freestanding marble columns, three registers of coloured 'marble' inlay cover the walls of the nave up to a height of 15 ft (4.5 m). Pollen described the walls of the Dublin church as 'all crusted over with marbles', betraying the influence of Lord Lindsay and Ruskin in this regard.[28] Pollen saw 'incrustation' as a defining feature of the basilican tradition, inherited from Roman public buildings, whereby a brick structure was covered with marble and mosaic:

> … slabs of marble were usually made to cover the walls up to a given height, fifteen to twenty-five feet, after which occurs generally a string or cornice holding them and binding them into the wall, while it marks the division between the marbles and the mosaic decorations, which, being in small dice, could assume the character of pictorial representation.[29]

The marbles in Dublin reach Pollen's minimum height of 15 ft, in keeping with the small size of his basilica (Figure 3.3).

The prioritising of these expensive marbles, or polished limestones, taken from across Ireland, within the modest budget speaks volumes

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26   Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 140.
27   Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 142–3.
28   Pollen, 'Lecture VI', 381.
29   Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 138–40.

Figure 3.3   University Church, Dublin. Left wall of the nave. © Niamh Bhalla

concerning the conception of the church: they too were a determining factor in the choice of a basilican design which would showcase them to best effect, and they also connected University Church meaningfully to its Irish context.[30] Pollen said of them:

> Naturally, too, in an institution like ours, yet in a state of infancy, and designed to draw out and deepen the heart and intelligence of the nation, we wished to set the example of developing, as far as resources went, the natural capabilities of Ireland; and geologically, the most valuable of these are the various veins of marble so plentifully compacted under and over the soil, on every coast and in every country … All these requirements, and more, were better to be fulfilled in a Basilica than in any other kind of building.[31]

30   The greens came from Galway, the reds from Cork, blacks from Kilkenny, and greys and browns from Laois and Armagh. Kane, 'John Henry Newman's Catholic University Church revisited', 110. See Hand, 'Kilkenny marble'. Pollen was enamoured by the beauty of the Irish 'marbles'. In a letter to Newman, dated 14 January 1856, now in the Pollen Archive (Archive of John Hungerford Pollen and the Pollen Family, 1828–2017, hereafter *PA*) in Oxford, Pollen describes two attractive columns of rich brown from Armagh as being most 'beautiful'. Letter [to John Henry Newman, Rome] from John Pollen, 62 Rathmines Road [Dublin], 14 January 1856, MS. 17906/5, fols. 27–8. *PA*. On true marble as the greatest cost incurred in early Christian and Byzantine churches, see James, *Mosaics*, 108–9.

31   Pollen, 'Lecture VI', 379.

Ruskin had argued that it was 'perfectly natural that the different kinds of stone used in [a wall's] successive courses should be of different colours … there are many associations and analogies which metaphysically justify the introduction of horizontal bands of colour, or of light and shade', one which was their 'suggestion of the natural courses of rocks and beds of the earth itself'.[32] The applied panels, rather than structural courses, of coloured stone in University Church brought strata of the Irish landscape into the church, and the technique of their execution imbued them with deeper symbolic significance still, connecting the Irish church to early Christian monuments. Pollen continued:

> The side walls are all crusted over with marbles in the peculiar mode called by the ancients *opus musivum*; no raised panellings as in the Gothic or modern Italian methods, only flat *intarsiature* without relief. This inlaid marble is bordered and incorporated into the wall by a string or running mould in the Byzantine manner, of Caen stone, roughed over with flat lines and covered with gold.[33]

Pollen observed this method in the buildings of Ravenna, such as the Orthodox baptistery and San Vitale, as well as in San Marco in Venice. That the design of these marbles was intended to appeal to such churches in order to channel the spirit of the early Church is clear in the description of University Church published in 1856 in the *Catholic University Gazette*, possibly penned by Newman, which said: 'To Irish productions we shall be indebted for a variety of colour and vein which might almost vie with St Mark's at Venice, that mine of the most precious relics of antiquity'.[34] The style and technique of the workmanship and apostolic lineage were considered inseparable.

Although the church is aisleless, the simulation of an arcaded, aisled design emulates the basilicas in Rome and Ravenna that employed the round-arched arcade – particularly San Clemente, San Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna (Figure 3.4) and Sant'Apollinare in Classe – as opposed

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32 Ruskin, *Works* 9, 347. Michael Hall has argued that 'the use of constructional polychromy in buildings alluded metaphorically to the natural world'. Hall, 'G.F. Bodley', 253. He also relates the widespread use of marbles and naturalistic motifs in churches of the 1850s to scientific naturalism and metaphor in Hall, 'What do Victorian churches mean?', 80–3.

33 Pollen, 'Lecture VI', 381.

34 Newman and Pollen worked together closely on the design for the marbles: in letters dated 18 and 27 August 1855, now in the Pollen Archive in Oxford, Pollen discusses the proportions and layout of the marbles which he hopes will meet with Newman's approval. Letter [to John Henry Newman] from John Pollen, 62 Rathmines Road [Dublin], 18 August 1855, MS. 17906/5, fols. 14–15; Letter [to John Henry Newman] from John Pollen, 62 Rathmines Road [Dublin], 27 August 1855, MS. 17906/5, fols. 16–17. *PA*.

Figure 3.4 San Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, sixth century. Interior view towards the apse. © Niamh Bhalla

to the post and lintel type construction found in the fifth-century church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. This effect is provided through the articulation of the lower register of each nave wall with five inlaid shafts of green Galway marble that give the illusion of columns. A thin black surround outlines these faux columns, their alabaster plinths and their relief alabaster capitals hosting birds, including mother birds caring for their young, making them appear to project outwards from the wall. The rich vertical grain of each 'column' also contributes towards this appearance of three dimensionality, which is enhanced further by small details such as the tiled zig-zag designs of brown, yellow and blue triangles that articulate, and seem to project from, each plinth. These green 'columns' subdivide the nave walls into twelve rectangular sections populated with duller rectangular marble panels of reds and browns arranged in a grid of black lines. This darker melody of reds, browns and black strikes a balance between emulating the shaded aisle space beyond the arcade in early Christian basilicas and producing a rich decorative effect on the wall surface (Figure 3.5).

It is here, in the employment of the incrusted method to suggest an aisled space beyond the pseudo-columns, that Pollen diverges from, or at least plays with, Ruskin's understanding of the appropriate use of cladding. For Pugin, the use of colour in architecture, if used, should be honest – clarifying and articulating the structural form of the building.

Figure 3.5 University Church, Dublin. Right wall of the nave. © Niamh Bhalla

For Ruskin, it was sufficient that incrustation should not be dishonest: it should not wilfully conceal or distort the supporting structure, discussed further below. Pollen, however, saw that with the method of incrustation, the structure was 'crusted over and concealed as by a coat, the forms and lines of which had no necessary connection with the mass beneath or behind it'.[35] Here there is an intriguing push to the extremity of this conviction in intentionally creating a structural allusion by means of marble inlay, though the stark gridded pattern ultimately breaks the allusion and declares the solid integrity of the wall's surface.

The inlaid green 'columns' support a pseudo-arcade of red marble above, with each arch highlighted by means of a tiled design in white with black and/or brown.[36] Throughout the church, strict symmetry is disregarded in favour of rich and lively variety. The glazed tile designs articulating these arches are all different to one another, for example, but they are answered on the opposing wall, not symmetrically but in the reverse order, a fact only realised by means of sustained looking. The red marble arches of the arcade are capped by a black band and above this is a series of red and black marble rectangles in a repeating pattern of two reds to every one black, divided by thin green strips which resonate with the design on the lower part of the walls. Above this again is the gold, painted moulding with hatched lines, deliberately executed in a Byzantine style according to Pollen.

Each arch of the pseudo-arcade frames a painted golden lunette executed by Pollen himself, most probably on roughened slate. They are embedded into the design so that they are flush with the surrounding marbles. There are four on each wall of the nave and three on the right-hand wall of the sanctuary opposite the choir gallery. The textured gold ground of each painting creates a play of light, and the inclusion of hatched lines within the arched frames internal to each painting, along with the insertion of pieces of coloured glass and polished marble, conspires to imitate the tesserae of mosaic, considered an inherently Byzantine art form in this period.[37] At the centre of each lunette is the standing figure

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35 Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 140. In using a metaphor suggesting the building as body and the decoration as dress, he was still responding to Ruskin's thought. See Chatterjee, *John Ruskin and the Fabric of Architecture*.

36 The use of colourful tiled designs throughout the church should be understood against the backdrop of the advancements made in manufacture of encaustic tiles from around 1839 and the accompanying interest in collecting medieval designs in newly published geometric pattern books, such as Matthew Digby Wyatt's *Specimens of the Geometrical Mosaic of the Middle Ages* (1848) and, ultimately Owen Jones's *The Grammar of Ornament* (1856). The use of tiled designs was also boosted through the opening of the Government School of Design in 1837 and the 1851 Great Exhibition. See Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 142.

37 See Chapter 5.

Figure 3.6 University Church, Dublin. Painting of St Laurence, right wall of the sanctuary. © Niamh Bhalla

of a saint flanked by an attendant angel on each side. The style of the paintings clearly resonates with the work of the Pre-Raphaelite painters, to whom Pollen was connected, and the desire to respond to late medieval styles of painting. Foliage and palm trees fill the remaining spaces, while vine and oak leaves decorate the outer arches. The saints in these paintings were chosen carefully for their significance: two of the sanctuary lunettes host the patron saints of Ireland – St Patrick and St Brigid – with the third dedicated to St Laurence, the patron saint of Dublin (Figure 3.6). Learned saints occupy the right-hand wall of the nave: St Dominic and St Benedict – founders of religious orders with a heavy emphasis on scholarship – and perhaps most fittingly, Thomas Aquinas, 'the father of scientific theology' and instructor at the University of Paris.

On the opposing wall are St Anthony of Padua who taught at the University of Bologna, St Philip Neri, founder of the Oratory, and Fiachra, an Irish saint. The final two are Jesuit saints – Ignatius of Loyola and John de Britto. Newman perceived a clear educational connection for most of the saints represented. In 1857, he wrote an article entitled 'The Mission of St Benedict', in which he divides the history of Catholic education into three periods; the ancient, the medieval and the modern: defined by the Benedictines, the Dominicans and the Jesuits, respectively.[38]

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38   Newman, *Historical Sketches* II, 366.

The inclusion of St Patrick here functioned to deny counterclaims by the Church of Ireland to continuous succession from St Patrick, and to affirm his papal commission and refute Protestant allegations that the early Irish church had not been under the authority of Rome.[39] Indeed, Newman in his Dublin lectures, delivered before the opening of the university in 1852, specifically connected the Irish educational context to Rome by means of St Patrick, saying:

> I cannot forget how it was from Rome that the glorious St Patrick was sent to Ireland and did a work so great that he could not have a successor in it, the sanctity and learning and zeal and charity which followed on his death being but the result of the one impulse which he gave.[40]

A later bust of Newman from 1892 by Sir Thomas Farrell (1827–1902) occupies a niche at the midpoint of the right wall of the nave, now complementing this litany of erudite saints. A pulpit, supported by four marble columns with alabaster capitals hosting the symbols and names of the four evangelists and surmounted by a canopy to amplify the voice of the preacher, separates the lunettes on the right-hand wall of the choir from those in the nave (Figure 3.7). The pulpit was given great prominence within the design by virtue of its size and positioning, in keeping with Newman's perception of the church as primarily a receptacle for preaching. Rectangular paintings of SS Peter and Paul in the same style as the lunettes frame the pulpit to either side, making the appeal to Rome explicit. The design of the marble inlay above and below the three sanctuary lunettes follows that of the nave walls, but the choicest 'marbles' were reserved for this space – the slabs here have a deeper colour saturation and more pronounced vein, such as the richly veined Connemara greens separating the darker marble rectangles in the uppermost section on the right-hand wall. The dark red panels of the choir gallery opposite this wall have white crosses in the centre to accent the most sacred space of the church differently and create greater visual interest (Figure 3.8). Subtle changes conspire to highlight the

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39 Indeed Cullen, while still head of the Irish College in Rome, had an article published in Duffy's *Irish Catholic Magazine* to reject the Protestant assertion that the Irish church was independent until the twelfth century ('Connexion', 1847, 9–11). See Sheehy, 'Irish church-building', 137. On the Presbyterian use of St Patrick in Ireland, which sums up the tensions, see Holmes, 'Patrick'.

40 Newman, *Idea*, 15. The use of appropriate saints to establish identity and mission was common in Victorian churches more generally. See Atkins, *Making and Remaking Saints*.

Figure 3.7   University Church, Dublin. The pulpit. © Niamh Bhalla

most sacred part of the building, culminating in the splendour of the semi-circular apse which is discussed fully in Chapter 5 as an expression of Newman's philosophy of education.

Counterbalancing the pulpit on the left-hand side of the church is the choir gallery, supported by eight freestanding columns of black and brown marble with carved alabaster capitals. The inclusion of the gallery in this unusual asymmetrical position was due to Newman's prioritising of music as part of the performance of the liturgy. An impressive ritual replete with music took precedence for Newman, so much so that in a letter to F. S. Bowles on the day that the agreement was signed for the ground of the church, he enthusiastically told him that he had already found a man to build the organ.[41] Newman also insisted on a flat, timber

41 *Letters and Diaries* 16, 492. On music within the Catholic liturgy in the long nineteenth cen-
    tury, particularly in relation to working class Irish audiences, see Muir, *Roman Catholic Church
    Music*. On the role of the organ in particular in nineteenth-century liturgical music, see Peit-
    salo, Jullander and Kuikka, *Liturgical Organ Music*, particularly the entry by Kurt Lueders,

Figure 3.8 University Church, Dublin. The choir gallery. © Niamh Bhalla

roof for the church for more favourable acoustics for preaching and music. Pollen, who would have preferred an open roof, painted the roof beams and joists in red with a white design, with a green design of oak leaves and acorns between them, painted directly onto the mortar. Liturgical music was central to the imposing effect that Newman desired, but he opted not to encroach on the congregational space and so this gallery, 30 × 6 ft (9 × 2 m), was built to left of the altar. The floor of the sanctuary occupies a higher level than that of the nave, as in Italian basilicas, and it is reached by a flight of steps, preceded by an alabaster altar rail, so that the columns supporting the gallery decrease in size as they ascend. The floor of the church was designed by Pollen using plain Minton tiles in red and black.

His use of gold painted woodwork complemented the marbles and golden pseudo-mosaics in creating a Byzantine effect. The painted woodwork of the choir gallery screen emulates gilded latticework and, indeed, much of the woodwork in the church was executed in the Byzantine manner. Pollen said:

> I introduced, something after the old Byzantine manner, pierced lattice in place of curtains in the singers' gallery, and pierced

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19–42. An extensive and excellent consideration of Newman's relationship with music is found in Nicholls, *Unearthly Beauty*.

Figure 3.9 University Church, Dublin. Detail of the sanctuary showing the candlesticks and apse decoration. © Niamh Bhalla

work in the baldacchino of the altar and pulpit. One of the joiners employed in the building carried this out to my complete satisfaction.[42]

Part of Pollen's conscious employment of Byzantine forms for the decoration were the five gilded domes of the wooden baldacchino in the apse, and the six tall candlesticks of the altar which were also clearly Byzantine in conception. Unable to afford metal, the candlesticks were created from gilded wood instead. The base of each comprises a leaf design imitating cut metalwork (Figure 3.9). Pollen drew the design onto the wood before they were carved by on-site carpenters who also made the pierced lattice panels of the gallery. Pollen understood that he was asking Irish craftsmen to create something they had no experience with, but he perceived this as a virtue because they had 'little to unlearn', producing the sort of lively, varied work for which Ruskin advocated poignantly.[43] The prominent golden accents of the interior and colourful marble columns with floriate alabaster capitals throughout the church were evidently influenced by the churches in Italy that Pollen had visited and studied in detail.[44]

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42   Pollen, 'Lecture VI', 381.
43   Pollen seems to be echoing the thought of Ruskin in this, see Ruskin, *Works* 9, 289.
44   Pollen measured and sketched the alabaster capitals in Ravenna's churches in detail in 1847. See Mary Pollen, *John Hungerford Pollen*, 81.

Pollen and Ruskin

Pollen was deeply influenced by the thought of John Ruskin, reading all his works as soon as they were published. Ruskin's influence is felt not only in the general choice of a Romano-Byzantine structure and polychromatic incrusted decoration in Dublin, but also in the particularities of the execution. Pollen seems to have been inspired by Ruskin in his use of monolithic shafts of variable sizes in the antechapel, for example, along with the shallowness of the relief carving throughout the church, the use of plants and animals as his primary sources of inspiration and the harmonious use of colour without any real stress on verisimilitude in its deployment – all prominent emphases within Ruskin's concept of good design.[45] In emulating the proportions and design of the arcades of the Fondaco de'Turchi in Venice, understood as an Italo-Byzantine building in the nineteenth century, it seems that Pollen was indebted to Ruskin's drawing of the building's elevation and his celebration of the subtle complexity of its varied proportions in *The Stones*, as much as the building itself.

The columns of the church resonate with those of the west front of San Marco in their variety and the subtle liveliness of their colour and decoration, along with the admixture of concave and convex forms for their capitals. In this, Pollen seems to have been influenced by Ruskin's celebration of the famous façade in both *Seven Lamps* and *The Stones*, and his celebration of the Byzantine craftsmen responsible for it, who, Ruskin said:

> … built altogether from feeling, and that it was because they did so, that there is this marvellous life, changefulness, and subtlety running through their every arrangement; and that we reason upon the lovely building as we should upon some fair growth of the trees of the earth, that know not their own beauty.[46]

Inspired by Ruskin's thought, Pollen desired for the carving at University Church, 'spirited work, calculated to produce its effects at the proper distance', rather than the work of highly trained carvers who 'would have attempted smoothness and what they call finish, and so ruined the design'.[47]

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45   Ruskin, *Works* 8, 183–4; 9, 350–3; 9, 265, for example. See Crinson, *Empire Building*, 84.
46   Ruskin, *Works* 8, 209.
47   Pollen, 'Lecture VI', 382, cf. Ruskin, *Works* 9, 289.

Ruskin had particularly advocated for living things such as plants and animals on capitals, and for every English flower to be documented;[48] and in this case characteristic Irish leaves were neatly captured.[48] Ruskin firmly believed that architectures were most compelling when connected to their surrounding landscape and nation. The use of marbles mined from the best of what Ireland had to offer to connect to the nation's character was no doubt inspired by such ideas, along with the natural forms carved into the alabaster of the capitals which took on native Irish forms such as shamrock, roses, acorns and oak leaves.[49] The carefully considered symbolic significance of these natural elements can be seen in the disruption of the Irish flora on the columns of the choir gallery where the fifth pillar nearest the altar hosts clusters of grapes instead to connect to the Eucharistic rite carried out in the neighbouring apse (Figure 3.10).

In other motifs, Pollen cites Ruskin: the roundels in the apse, which are arranged in floral forms articulated by means of a simple gold interlace (Figure 3.9), are a reworking of a decorative form found on the façade of the Palazzo Dario in Venice.[50] In their colouring and proportion, however, they resonate more so with the reproduction of this Venetian motif by Ruskin for the first plate in the first volume of

Figure 3.10   University Church, Dublin. Detail showing the capital of the fifth column of the choir gallery which is carved with leaves and clusters of grapes. © Niamh Bhalla

48   Ruskin, *Works* 8, 183; 10, 230. On the similar use of naturalistic carvings based on Irish flora and fauna in the Museum Building, see Wyse Jackson and Wyse Jackson, 'A stone menagerie'.
49   Ruskin asserted that 'the proper material of ornament will be whatever God has created'. Ruskin, *Works* 9, 265. See also his early essay *The Poetry of Architecture* (1837–8).
50   The Venetian Gothic palazzo was remodelled in the fifteenth century.

Figure 3.11   Dean and Woodward, the Museum Building, Trinity College Dublin, 1852–7. View of the exterior. © Niamh Bhalla

The Stones, rather than the Venetian originals.[51] In contrast to both the originals and Ruskin's reproduction, however, Pollen's roundels use projecting polished stones and omit the circular frame enclosing the large central roundel, demonstrating once again his commitment to response rather than imitation. The roundels were also emulated on three of the exterior elevations of the Museum Building being built at Trinity College Dublin when Pollen arrived in the country, where the building's debt to the façades of the Palazzo Dario and the Casa Visetti in Venice was acknowledged.[52] The use of the roundels on the exterior of the Museum Building – a building profoundly influenced by Ruskin's thought which exerted a clear influence on aspects of University Church – more closely resemble the Venetian originals in their colouring and disposition (Figure 3.11).[53]

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51   See Ruskin, *Works* 9, 34–5. The roundels were also illustrated in 'The Palazzo Dario', *The Builder* 9 (29 March 1851), 202.
52   'Addition to Trinity College Dublin', *The Builder* 11 (2 July 1853), 420.
53   This evident influence was probably behind what Eileen Kane has identified as the misattribution of the design of University Church to Deane and Woodward over the years. Kane, 'John Henry Newman's Catholic University Church revisited', 14.

Ruskin and the Museum Building at Trinity College Dublin

The Museum Building, built between 1852–7 by the architectural firm Deane, Son and Woodward according to a plan devised in large part by architect Benjamin Woodward (1816–1861) that developed upon an earlier proposal by college architect John McCurdy (1824–1885), was well underway when Pollen arrived in Dublin.[54] Sir Thomas Deane (1792–1871), founder of the practice, himself described the style as 'fifteenth-century Byzantine Period', but it was variously described at the time as Romanesque, Renaissance and as having 'the Venetian character of Lombardic architecture'.[55] More recently, its round-arched eclecticism, horizontal massing and fenestration pattern have prompted comparison with the Rundbogenstil of Bavaria.[56] The smooth exterior walls of the two-storeyed, palazzo-style building were faced with Wicklow Ballyknockan granite, while the quoins and engaged columns of the round-arched windows that punctuate the façade, along with their ornate botanical capitals, were carved from Portland stone imported from Dorset.[57] Save for its Venetian roundels, its exterior bears no similarity to University Church, which was categorically an architecture of the interior.

It is in the interior of the building that the close connection between the Museum Building and University Church may be observed (Figure 3.12). Here the cool hues of the exterior dissipate and give way to a warmer polychromatic space, which undoubtedly informed the exploitation of Ireland's natural stones at University Church, providing as it did what Louise Caulfield terms 'the first major example of polychromy derived from indigenous stone in Ireland and Britain'.[58] The walls of the main, double height entrance hall, which is atmospherically lit from above, are faced with Caen stone from Normandy. Framing

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54 On the long and contentious debate over intellectual ownership of the building's plan, which played out most notably in *The Builder*, see Blau, *Ruskinian Gothic*, 29–31.

55 Lancaster, 'The Seventh City', 13; Blau, *Ruskinian Gothic*, 31–2; O'Dwyer, *The Architecture of Deane and Woodward*, 138; Hewison, *Ruskin on Venice*, 212. Tierney, 'The architectural sources' looks at the Museum Building's 'rich combination of architectural features from disparate sources'. The eclecticism of the building has led scholars to ascertain numerous spheres of influence and specific buildings from Charles Barry's Traveller's Club, on Pall Mall – particularly the garden façade designed in 1832 – to the Mosque of Cordoba.

56 McParland, 'Trinity College Dublin'; 'Beyond Ruskin'; Blau, *Ruskinian Gothic*, 32–3. The Rundbogenstil is discussed in Chapter 2.

57 On Ballyknockan granite, see Hussey, 'Granite quarrying'.

58 Caulfield, 'The Irish Marble Industry', 13. The stones were first identified with precision in Wyse Jackson, 'A Victorian landmark'. For a detailed analysis, see Caulfield and Wyse Jackson, 'Appendix'.

Figure 3.12   Dean and Woodward, the Museum Building, Trinity College Dublin, 1852–7. Interior view of the atrium hall. © Niamh Bhalla

the central staircase that dominates the space are thick, freestanding 'marble' columns arranged in two tiers of Byzantinising round-arched arcades. The columns supporting the internal arcades were created from the full-range of Irish coloured limestones available at the time, with the addition of reddish-black Cornish serpentine.

The columns are surmounted by vegetal and floriate capitals carved from Caen stone: the lighter hue of the capitals contrasts effectively with the coloured shafts (Figure 3.13). Coloured marble columns surmounted by capitals in a lighter stone were found in basilican churches such as Sant'Apollinare in Classe, San Clemente and most effectively in the interior of Hagia Sophia and on the façade of San Marco in Venice, as appreciated by Pollen who saw this combination as a defining feature of the basilican type (Figure 3.2). However, the use of variously coloured columns arranged without any apparent regard for symmetry or pattern at University Church was clearly influenced by the deployment of these columns in the Museum Building. The round-arched, Byzantine-Venetian

Figure 3.13 The Museum Building, Trinity College Dublin, 1852–7. Detail of the capitals in the atrium hall. © Niamh Bhalla

design at the Museum Building was also mixed unabashedly with features from Islamic architecture in the interior. The alternating red and white voussoirs of the internal arcades, constructed of Portland stone and a red-hued sandstone, echo Islamic structures such as the Great Mosque of Cordoba, while the polychromatic 'tiles' of the two internal domes situated over the main staircase – which are actually bricks covered on their exposed face with polychrome ceramic – resonate also with Islamic design.[59] The double dome form, however, is most often considered as a Byzantinising feature influenced by San Marco.

The Venetian influence evident in the building prompted the Irish poet William Allingham (1824–1889), who spent time with the Pre-Raphaelites in London each summer, to write to Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828–1882) on 28 May 1855, saying that the building, which had so evidently been designed 'after Ruskin's heart', would have 'all you cognoscenti … rushing over to examine the Stones of Dublin'.[60]

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59 This sort of brickwork is most prominently found in the Islamic architecture of Iran, and it is mostly found on the exterior of buildings, rather than as continuous coverage on the interior of a dome.

60 Quoted in Cook, *The Life of John Ruskin*, 445; also cited and discussed in O'Dwyer, *The Architecture of Deane and Woodward*, 146. The Ruskinian principles embodied in the building, were articulated persuasively and at length in Blau, *Ruskinian Gothic*. They have been analysed and critiqued more recently in McParland, 'Beyond Ruskin'.

Indeed, Ruskin himself, speaking in Dublin in 1868, attributed to this building 'the first realisation I had the joy to see of the principles, I had until then been endeavouring to teach'.[61] However, Christine Casey and Patrick Wyse Jackson's recent volume, which entails a masterful reassessment of the Museum Building – most often framed solely as 'a truly Ruskinian architecture' – has demonstrated that, although Ruskin's thought provided a 'poetic call to arms' regarding many of the principles underpinning the building, greater weight must be afforded to innovation based on Irish resources, traditions and socio-economic stimuli, including the expansion of Irish industry.[62]

The Museum Building broke new ground in its extensive use of Irish stones, with Sir Thomas Deane himself saying that he hoped 'the good example now set by the college of largely using Native Marbles' would 'induce greater facility to be given and exertion made towards the proper development of the resources of the country'.[63] It did, and University Church was the first demonstration of the building's influence in this regard. Indeed, Pollen's choice of words in his description of his basilica, when he says, 'we wished to set the example of developing, as far as resources went, the natural capabilities of Ireland', seems to acknowledge the line they were following, which was most likely influenced by discussions with his friend Woodward, as well as the wider conversations concerning Irish materials and industry that were burgeoning at the time they were building.

Ruskin had provided an eloquent and persuasive apologia for the harnessing and exploitation of native construction materials, but there were others moving in this direction over previous decades concerning the integrity of using native materials, structures and technologies – for example, Pugin and those discussed in the previous chapter in relation to the Rundbogenstil. Indeed, in the Museum Building's use of indigenous materials and responsiveness to the Irish socio-economic context and climate, Edward McParland has traced a similar ethos in its design to that found in Heinrich Hübsch's conceptualisation of the Rundbogenstil. Looking beyond Ruskin's influence, McParland builds on previous comparisons to the Rundbogenstil in Bavaria to chart a formal connection between the Museum Building's eclectic, non-archaeological

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61   Ruskin, *Sesame and Lilies* in *Works* 17, 103.
62   It was Blau, *Ruskinian Gothic*, 3, who argued that Ruskin's principles, rather than any stylistic imperative, were present and operative in the Museum Building, and other designs by Woodward. On Ruskin's 'poetic call to arms', see Tierney, 'Reviving the artisan sculptor', 191.
63   Letter from Sir Thomas Deane to the Rev. Dr. Sadler, 4 May 1855 [MUN/P/2/340 TCD Library, Dublin]. Discussed in Blau, *Ruskinian Gothic*, 39.

round-arch revivalist style and Ludwig I's buildings of Munich which held great interest for architects in the United Kingdom.[64]

Caulfield charts how the exploitation of Ireland's natural resources was made possible by the increase in geological studies and expertise in Ireland from the eighteenth century onwards, the opening of Irish quarries such as those in Kilkenny (mid-eighteenth century) and Connemara (1820), and post-famine advances in industrial development which provided the necessary infrastructure for connecting these regional enterprises to new building projects in urban centres, along with the increasing professionalisation and education of the artisan class through institutions, museums and trade exhibitions.[65] Casey argues that the 'radical polychromy' of the Museum Building was made possible not only through the creativity and expertise of Woodward, but through 'an imbrication of architecture, geology and engineering'.[66] Much of the latter was supported by the foundation of the Museum of Economic Geology in 1845 by Sir Robert Kane (1809–1890), later renamed the Museum of Irish Industry, the mission of which was to improve education in order to exploit the natural resources of Ireland more effectively, to ultimately improve living standards.[67]

The entrance hall of the museum at 51 St Stephen's Green, a stone's throw away from where University Church was built, was finished by the time of the seminal Dublin Industrial Exhibition of 1853, which had its own 'Irish Marble Court' and did much to encourage the use of Irish marbles.[68] Whereas the columns at University Church were influenced by the Museum Building, the marble inlay of the church's walls were most likely informed by the panelling of the museum hallway, which comprised a colourful and impressive collection of inlaid Irish stones that Newman and Pollen must have seen and been impressed by. It is also probable that Pollen had already seen some of the beautiful limestones quarried in Ireland – which were more abundantly available in Ireland than England – displayed at the Great Exhibition of 1851.[69] *The Builder* had also published articles on Irish marbles in 1852

64   McParland, 'Beyond Ruskin'.
65   Caulfield, 'The Irish marble industry'. On emerging geological interest in Ireland from the eighteenth century, see Wyse Jackson, 'Fluctuations in fortune'. On the Irish quarries, see Hand, 'Doing everything of marble'; 'Kilkenny marble'.
66   Casey, 'The Museum Building's radical polychromy'.
67   Cullen, 'The Museum of Irish Industry'; Caulfield, 'The Irish marble industry', 15–16.
68   See 'The Great Industrial Exhibition of Ireland'; Maguire, *The Industrial Movement*; Sproule, *Irish Industrial Exhibition*; Caulfield, 'The Irish marble industry', 18.
69   William Manderson of Killaloe Marble Works who supplied coloured stones for the Museum Building exhibited there. See Caulfield, 'The Irish marble industry', 17.

and 1853.[70] A greater variety of marbles were employed at University Church than at the Museum Building because the employment of thin veneers made the use of more fragile stones possible.[71]

The Museum Building's columns were clearly formative for the work at University Church, however, not only in terms of their employment of Irish coloured marbles, but also in terms of the naturalistic carvings of their capitals. In the spirit of Ruskin, the Irish carvers employed at the Museum Building, the brothers John and James O'Shea, were permitted to use native forms and their own artistic initiative, being given only verbal instruction for the architectural sculptures there, to wonderful effect.[72] The absence of drawn instruction given to the workmen was intended at the Museum Building to create the sort of variety, vivacity and 'rough handling' that Ruskin had so eloquently advocated for, which he saw as emanating from workmen turning to nature for inspiration and working directly and viscerally from it.[73] Ruskin himself subsequently lauded the Museum Building in 1858 as the first in Britain to espouse the important principle of the 'liberty of workmen'.[74]

The encouragement of independent creativity in masons is consistently identified as one of Ruskin's most significant contributions to revivalist architectures in the British Isles, and the Irish Press immediately framed the O'Shea's talented expression at the Museum Building as the outworking of Ruskin's ideas, at precisely the moment that Pollen was building, calling it '… the first experiment which has been made in the United Kingdom of giving the artisan's power of design full play, with only the necessary restriction, that he shall use none but natural objects for his models'.[75] In the use of Irish craftsmen to carve expressions of Irish flora for the capitals of University Church, Pollen followed the example of Woodward in this regard, but the carving of the capitals at the Museum Building was admittedly more inventive and proficient due

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70   In 'The marbles of Connemara', *The Builder*, vol. 10 (17 July 1852), 455, the marbles of Connemara are described as among the most 'beautiful productions of the earth'; another article makes note of 'the resources of Ireland' in this regard ('introductory article', *The Builder*, vol. 10 (31 July 1852), 483). See also *The Builder* 11, 21 May 1853, 323. There were other important publications which Pollen may have been influenced by such as Wilkinson, *The Practical Geology*.

71   Noted in Caulfield, 'The Irish marble industry', 40.

72   O'Dwyer, 'Deane and Woodward'; Curran, 'Benjamin Woodward, Ruskin and the O'Sheas'; O'Dwyer, *The Architecture of Deane and Woodward*, 149.

73   See, for example, Ruskin, *Works* 8, 214–15.

74   A letter read at the Architectural Congress in Oxford in 1858. *Building News* IV, 19 November 1858, 1146.

75   'The new museum and lecture-rooms', *Dublin Daily Express*, 25 September 1855. Discussed in Tierney, 'Reviving the artisan sculptor', 191.

to the involvement of the talented O'Shea brothers. It is also unclear whether Pollen provided drawings for his carvers or not.

Despite the clear influence of Ruskin on the approach to architectural sculpture at the Museum Building, Andrew Tierney and others have also recently recontextualised the brothers' achievements aside from the Ruskinian romanticism that has tended to frame them as unbridled native creatives who were almost untrained. Tierney charts the equally important influence on their work of increasing endorsements of botanically accurate, naturalistic flora for historicist architectural expressions within the Neo-Gothic movement, such as James K. Colling's 'Ornamentation from natural types', published in *The Builder* in 1848, which Colling thought 'might be made to produce for us a system of ornamentation copious, original and beautiful'. Colling asserted that 'it was from nature that the medieval artists obtained their abundant variety, and they often went back to the pure source for fresh inspiration'.[76] A similar naturalism had already influenced Woodward's earlier Gothic revival work at the Queen's College in Cork in the period of his career most influenced by Pugin's thought, prior to coming under the influence of Ruskin.[77]

Although Ruskin's thought undoubtedly informed the design of the Museum Building, Casey and Wyse Jackson's volume rightly acknowledges the 'longer gestation' of the building prior to Ruskin and the external factors that drove the building's innovative form. Both the Museum Building and University Church were birthed at the intersection of influences coming from Ruskin and the Rundbogenstil, concurrent debates concerning polychromy and the impetus provided by competitive innovation made possible by material, industrial and socio-economic advances. Just as the Museum Building was closely related to and inspired by principles found in Ruskin's thought; University Church was not so much an emulation of the style of the Museum Building as some of its principles; chief among which was the elevation of the role of the artisan carver and the exploitation of Ireland's natural resources and industry.

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76 James Colling, 'Ornamentation from natural types', 150–1; see also a further article 'Gothic ornaments', 1848, 595, on the naturalistic carvings from the chapter house at Southwell Minster. Discussed in Tierney, 'Reviving the Artisan Sculptor', 194. For an excellent introduction to the explosion of interest in inorganic and organic sources of inspiration in the long nineteenth century, which is too large a topic to address here, see Bergdoll, 'Of crystals, cells and strata'.

77 For more developments that influenced this sort of carving such as the emergence of cast-based architectural training and the increased encouragement of free-handed competency for architectural modelling, see Tierney, 'Reviving the artisan sculptor'. On naturalism at the Museum building, see Wyse Jackson and Wyse Jackson, 'A stone menagerie'. On naturalism at Queen's College, Cork, see O'Dwyer, *The Architecture of Dean and Woodward*, 52–88.

At University Church, Pollen was influenced by and carried out his work according to some but not all of Ruskin's principles, and the expression of these principles was no doubt influenced by their manifestation at the Museum Building and his burgeoning friendship with Woodward. The later close working relationship between Pollen and Woodward is well documented, but it started in Dublin. By 1857, when Pollen left Dublin to return to London, their close connection as collaborators was established, and in that year, Pollen designed for Woodward the sculptural programme for the government offices project and the Crown Life Office (1856–8, demolished in 1866) and he worked on the murals for the Oxford Union (1856–7) with some of the Pre-Raphaelites.[78]

As Blau has adroitly noted, 'Ruskin's principles alone were too limited to engender a distinctive architectural style'; indeed, although they were both inspired to varying extents by Ruskin's thought, University Church and the Museum Building were not closely related in their overall style to one another, beyond their use of the round-arch, their embrace of an interior polychromy, which was more extensive at University Church because of the appeal to the incrusted basilican style, and in their beautiful columns made of Irish 'marbles' with pale stone capitals carved into native naturalistic forms by Irish workmen.[79] In this, they were both influenced by Ruskin's 'poetic call to arms' and wider thought in the mid-nineteenth century on materials, ornament, industry and innovation.

Pollen, Ruskin and the use of colour at University Church

> I cannot, therefore, consider architecture in anywise perfect without colour … I think the colours of architecture should be those of natural stones.[80]

It was in his approach to colour that Pollen was most aligned to Ruskin's thought, and it is in its use in the Dublin church that the Byzantinism of

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78 In a letter to Coventry Patmore in early 1857, Rossetti says 'I met last night at Woodward's a Mr Pollen …' Doughty and Wahl, *Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti* I: no. 270, 324, which most likely refers to a meeting at Deane and Woodward's London office at 88 St James Street. For more on their close connection, see McGrath, *Newman in Dublin*, 15–24.

79 Blau, *Ruskinian Gothic*, 8. At the end of *The Seven Lamps*, Ruskin recommended for contemporary architecture the styles of Pisan Romanesque, Early Italian Gothic, Venetian Gothic and the English early decorated style, which Eve Blau persuasively argues was because they best embodied his precepts. Ruskin, *Works* 8, 258; Blau, *Ruskinian Gothic*, 35.

80 Ruskin, *Works* 8, 176.

the structure is most clearly observed, through the extensive sheathing of the interior with polychromy and golden pseudo-mosaics.[81] At the time of building his temporary Oratory church at Edgbaston, Birmingham, built between 1852–3 just prior to building University Church, Newman made clear that colour was an important way of beautifying the setting for the liturgy when funds were not amply available: he looked for someone excellent in relation to colour saying, 'since we do not distinguish ourselves in *form*, we must make much of colour'.[82] The same predicament presented itself in Dublin but, as with everything else, cost was not the only motivating factor.

In his articulation of the implicit strengths of Venetian Gothic, Lombardic and Byzantine architecture, Ruskin particularly celebrated the use of colour in Byzantine design, connecting 'the bright hues of the early architecture of Venice' to 'the solemnity of her early and earnest religion', thus replacing concepts of sensuousness and super-fluidity with piety and seriousness.[83] Detractors, who lamented his disregard for the classical tradition, saw that it was precisely Ruskin's 'singular delight in colour … which he sees as somehow connected to the religious sentiment' that lay behind his 'love of the Byzantine style, and admiration of the principle of incrustation', which admittedly was, even for this particular detractor, 'the only legitimate means of giving to a building perfect and permanent chromatic decoration'.[84] The unnamed author of this article in *The Builder* thought that colour should not predominate over architectural form, regardless, echoing the larger debates of the mid-nineteenth century concerning the role of colour in architecture, not only concerning whether it should be used or not, but its role if it was – namely, whether it should be structural or applied and whether it should conceal or articulate architectural form.[85]

Ruskin's writings received a mixed reception in this regard but by 1855 figures like the architect George Edmund Street (1824–1881),

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81 Excellence in the sustained and extensive use of colour was perceived to be one of the signature traits of the Byzantine style. See 'Letters to a lady, embodying a popular sketch of the history of architecture, and the characteristics of the various styles which have prevailed, no. XI', *The Builder* 10 (10 July 1852), 437.

82 *Letters and Diaries* 14, 294. On the Birmingham church, see Tristam, *Cardinal Newman and the Church*.

83 Ruskin, *Works* 10, 177.

84 'Classical columnar architecture', *The Builder* 11 (3 December 1853), 723.

85 Jackson, 'Clarity or camouflage'. These discussions emerged from the debate concerning the colouring of Greek sculptures, particularly the Elgin marbles, along with growing interest in medieval Italian architecture, increased exposure to Islamic architecture and debates concerning the expanding use of brick in British architecture.

who exerted a great influence on the later Arts and Crafts movement, argued that colour should be included more in the interior of buildings, either structurally or by means of paint.[86] In arguing for the increased use of interior polychromy, Street summarised the two modes of employing coloured stones in construction as either 'the veneering of brick walls with thin layers or coats of marble' or employing the marble as a 'portion of the substance of the wall'.[87] The former, associated with the Venetian school, was 'rather likely to be destructive of good architecture', according to Street, because it concealed construction, whereas the latter explained the structure and thus was more aligned with the expression of religious truth in keeping with the paradigm of Pugin.[88] Pugin had earlier attributed a 'moral quality' to the structural deployment of colour in construction as the expression of truth and integrity, connecting it more narrowly to Catholicism.[89] Ruskin on the other hand, although similarly framed as one of the leading protagonists in the increasing use of constructional polychromy, held a more ambiguous position on the best employment of colour. The colour of medieval buildings was for Ruskin intimately associated with nature's vitality, truth and awe, but in a manner somewhat different to Pugin. Although Ruskin advocated for constructional polychromy, particularly courses of coloured bricks and marbles in keeping with his geological interests, in reality he seemed to favour incrustation, whereby bricks were clad in marble and mosaic. For Ruskin, it was more so the case that decoration should remain true to its materials and not be actively deceitful, rather than insisting upon structural articulation by means of constructional polychromy.[90]

Generally, a connection between colour and Byzantine design was widely held, defined by means of the application of marbles and mosaics, but also polychromatic brickwork. Pollen saw colour as one of the defining principles of the basilican tradition, achieved primarily by means of incrustation, and he saw the eastern tradition as excelling far beyond the West in this regard.[91] Wyatt and Waring also saw polychromatic decoration as inherently connected to Byzantine architecture,

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86 Street, *Brick and Marble*, 128–9. Ruskin praised Street's use of architectural colour harmonies derived from nature in works such as the bands of Devonshire marble that he included underneath the capitals in the nave of St Paul's, Herne Hill, London (1843–5), which was rebuilt by Street after a devastating fire in 1858. See Hall, 'G.F. Bodley', 253.

87 Street, *Brick and Marble*, 278.

88 Street, *Brick and Marble*, 279.

89 See Jackson, 'Clarity or camouflage', 201.

90 Jackson, 'Clarity or camouflage'; Hall, 'G.F. Bodley'.

91 Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 141.

'by the means of which the beauties of all its forms were so materially enhanced'.[92] The Byzantinism of the church is most evident in Pollen's rich and sustained use of colour and texture across its structural surfaces, and in this Pollen seems to have absorbed Ruskin's connection between true, authentic Christianity and colour. The confidence with which Pollen covered the interior of the church with polychromy was most likely bolstered by Ruskin's defence of its use in terms of its nobility, purity and sanctity, but the execution was most certainly informed by his travels.

Pollen attributed his finely tuned considerations of colour and light to having travelled to the definitive Christian basilicas in person. For Pollen, the basilica and colour were inextricably connected, and he attributed the lack of interest in the basilica in his day to an inability to master polychromy. Indeed, his main criticism of contemporary Gothic design was the relative absence of colour which he saw as inculcating affect and bringing perfection to form. It is clear in his writings that light and the colourful effect of the whole, which he perceived as a 'melody', were determinative in terms of his design process in Dublin.[93] In a letter to Newman, dated 1 November 1856, Pollen explained, 'Colour is the one element which cannot be done but by an experienced eye. The slightest change in any tint is to destroy the whole – it is like altering a note in music'.[94] He also carefully planned the positioning of the windows, placed at irregular intervals just below the roof, 'so as to give the whole of the wall decorations the best possible chance of showing themselves' without excessive light or shade.[95] The thick circular panels used for the windows, which have a dense knot of green glass at their centre, were produced for Pollen by a Dublin bottle factory. Every aspect and accent of Pollen's design connected and harmonised with the whole. Colour and light executed well were the defining qualities of the 'consummate grandeur' of the basilica, and they were key for Pollen in achieving the affective whole that Newman desired.

Pollen saw the altar – which was clearly inspired by the format of the tenth-century altar in the Basilica of Sant'Ambrogio in Milan – as bringing this impressive polychromatic harmony together (Figure 3.14).[96] In a

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92 Wyatt and Waring, *The Byzantine and Romanesque*, 29.
93 Pollen, 'Lecture VI', 261.
94 Letter [to John Henry Newman] from John Pollen, 24 P[rince's] G[ate], London, 11 November [1856]. MS. 17906/5, fols. 66–7. *PA*.
95 Pollen, 'Lecture VI', 379.
96 Kane, 'John Henry Newman's Catholic University Church revisited', 16.
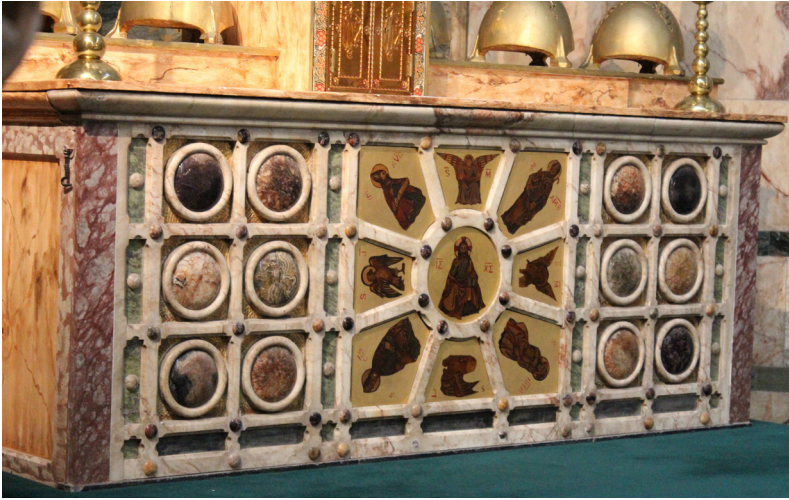
Figure 3.14   University Church, Dublin. The altar. © Niamh Bhalla

letter sent on 8 August 1855, Pollen described the altar of the church as being 'the key note to all my colours and splendour', the heart of his finely tuned symphony of colour and affect.[97] In all of his letters to Newman, Pollen demonstrates his determination to source exquisite colours and precious materials at the best possible price, not least in relation to the materials for this altar.[98] The altar frontal comprises three panels of alabaster. The compartments flanking the central section are decorated with Derbyshire fluorspar crystals arranged in two groups of six which were intended to emulate the appearance of 'precious stones'.[99] Pollen identified the cross that dominates the central panel as a 'Byzantine cross, with a Christ in glory and the four Evangelists and four Doctors radiating round Him'.[100] The cross forms nine compartments, each with an inset wooden panel painted gold as a backdrop for the holy figures: Christ in Majesty appears in the centre of the cross with the evangelists John and Matthew to the left and right, and Mark and Luke above and below. The doctors of the Latin Church appear in the corners – Augustine, Ambrose, Gregory and Jerome.

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97   Letter [to John Henry Newman] from John Pollen, 62 R[athmines] R[oad] [Dublin], 8 August [1855]. MS. 17906/5, fols. 10–11. *PA*.
98   See, for example, his discussion of obtaining 'lumps or circles of polished spars of the most exquisite colours' in a letter dated 15 October 1855. Letter [to John Henry Newman] from John Pollen, 62 Rathmines Road [Dublin], 15 October [1855], MS. 17906/5, fols. 24–5. *PA*.
99   Pollen, 'Lecture VI', 381.
100 Pollen, 'Lecture VI', 381.

The paintings and the Nazarenes

The original paintings that hung above the marble inlay on the nave walls also formed part of the carefully planned and colourful analogy through which the Dublin church was aligned to the early Church and Rome. Above the level of the marbles there were once large paintings modelled on the set of tapestries designed by Raphael (1483–1520) – representing events from the lives of saints Peter and Paul, and the death of the proto-martyr St Stephen – which were commissioned by Pope Leo X (1513–21) in 1515 for the Sistine Chapel.[101] These copies of the Vatican scenes were punctuated by copies of the paintings of the twelve apostles from the nave pillars in the abbey church of Tre Fontane, Rome, thought at the time to be the work of Raphael or his school and of a similar date to the tapestries.[102] These apostles were themselves colour copies of grisaille fresco paintings in the Vatican 'Sala dei Palafrenieri'.[103] The paintings deteriorated considerably over time and were replaced with bright acrylic paintings by Levent Tuncer at the beginning of the twenty-first century. From the early 1800s, interest grew in 'archaic' or 'primitive' Christian works of art predating those of the High Renaissance as part of the drive to reinvigorate Christian spirituality. Attentiveness to these 'purer' art works manifested prominently in the formation of groups such as the Brotherhood of Saint Luke – derogatively termed the Nazarenes by those who mocked their appearance and medieval-ising lifestyle – the group of German Romantic painters who rejected neoclassicism and drew inspiration from medieval and early Renaissance religious art, discussed in the previous chapter.[104]

The Brotherhood of Saint Luke were at their height in Rome after 1812 when Peter Cornelius joined Johann Friedrich Overbeck in leading the movement there. Cornelius was brought to Munich in the 1820s by Ludwig I, where he played a decisive role in the reinvigoration of mural painting in the tradition of the early Italian masters, and in November

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101 *Letters and Diaries* 17, 142. Newman explained that they were modelled after the tapestries.
102 The paintings in the Dublin church are, from right to left on the north wall of the nave: the Stoning of St Stephen, the Sacrifice of Lystra, the Blinding of Elymas, the Healing of the Lame Man at the Beautiful Gate. On the south wall, from right to left, are: The Death of Ananias, the Miraculous Draught of Fishes, Christ's Charge to Peter, Paul Preaching at Athens and the Conversion of Saul. A tenth image in the church was the Descent of the Holy Spirit which must have been taken from another unidentified source, given that in the Vatican the tenth subject is Paul in prison.
103 Kane, 'John Henry Newman's Catholic University Church revisited', 17.
104 Lightbrown, 'The inspiration of Christian art'; Vaughan, *German Romantic Painting*, esp. 163–7; Grewe, *The Nazarenes*; Saul, *The Cambridge Companion*.

1841 he was called to London to consult on the redecoration of the Houses of Parliament, with the idea that he might be able to stimulate an English school of history painting.[105] There was great interest in the painting style of the Nazarenes in England, and many antiquarians, professionals and students travelled to Munich to learn, not only of the Rundbogenstil architecture there, but also of the painted programmes of the Nazarenes. Indeed, in 1851, John Gregory Crace (1809–1889), director of a firm of decorators charged with the redecoration of the Houses of Parliament, gave a lecture to members of the Royal Institute of British Architects on the Munich interiors following his trip there in 1843, complete with forty watercolours, focused particularly on the works of Gärtner.[106]

The paintings at University Church were connected to the Nazarene movement and the Rundbogenstil buildings that contained their painted programmes. Comparable to the slightly earlier churches of Munich – where Byzantinism had already tentatively emerged as part of the Rundbogenstil – the revivalist style of the structure and decoration was married to the work of contemporary Romantic painters. Newman had shown interest in the Nazarene painters even prior to his conversion, and while he was in Rome in 1847 he met with Overbeck and then travelled with the Nazarene painter Heinrich von Hess to Munich on his journey home, where he admired 'the celebrated frescoes', commenting that those of Hess, who had painted both the Allerheiligen-Hofkirche and St Boniface there, were 'the most beautiful'.[107] Indeed, the placement of narrative religious scenes painted in the Nazarene style above the pseudo-arcade in University Church, accompanied by a hieratical golden pseudo-mosaic in the apse, closely mirrored the disposition of the decorative scheme of St Boniface in Munich, which Pollen had also been impressed by on his visit there, which itself took its leave from earlier basilican churches like San Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna (Figures 2.2 and 3.4).

Newman personally commissioned the paintings, however, while on a visit to Rome, and it is clear from their correspondence that Pollen was not entirely convinced on the approach. A letter of 10 February 1856 gives insight into Pollen's uncertainty regarding mixing 'modern' Italian styles with the basilica, regardless of his appreciation of St Boniface and the work of the Nazarenes, particularly with regard to how the colours of

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105 Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 76.
106 Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 76.
107 *Letters and Diaries* 12, 135, 151. On his request for a 'cheap Edition of Overbeck' while still at Littlemore in 1840, see *Letters and Diaries* 7, 252.

the paintings would mix with those of the marbles.[108] It seems that Pollen may have wished to employ a pictorial style and colour scheme more in keeping with those of the incrusted basilican tradition. Despite Newman casually referring to these paintings as 'copies of standard pictures', it is clear that he felt quite determined to include them, regardless of Pollen's opinion on the matter, and his letters betray his very careful consideration of their design and integration into the church.

Newman had written to Pollen from Rome on 1 February 1856 saying that he had come to an arrangement with one 'M. Platner' – a disciple of the Nazarene school which continued to influence artistic circles in Rome despite many of its chief protagonists having dispersed by that point – and that they had engaged a French painter to complete the paintings.[109] On 3 July, the *Catholic University Gazette* named two French painters from Lyons, namely M. M. Sublet and Souslacroix, in an update on the paintings which had yet to arrive. Eileen Kane suggests they may have been Benoit-Antoine Sublet (1821–1897), a French Catholic painter known for archaising religious paintings, and Charles Joseph Soulacroix (1825–1889), a pupil of Cornelius. Overbeck had an assistant called Ferdinand Platner, son of the Ernst Platner who was responsible for the seminal Roman guidebook, *Description of the City of Rome*, along with Bunsen, and he was probably the person referenced as assisting in the design by Newman.[110] Newman's paintings clearly belonged to the general milieu of the Nazarenes and related artists.

In 1847, Nicholas Wiseman (1802–1865), who went on to become the first Catholic Archbishop of Westminster in 1850, wrote a rallying call in the *Dublin Review* for 'a school of English religious art' modelled on movements like the Nazarenes which took their leave from quattrocento masters like the 'blessed' Fra Angelico (1395–1455). At the end of his article, which was nominally intended as a review of Lord Lindsay's *Sketches*, Wiseman quotes a passage from Lindsay's text which outlined the conundrum of the Gothic revival – that in erecting churches from the past, either the Catholic faith that they originally belonged to would eventually have to be resurrected too, or those models abandoned as inappropriate for present liturgical use within the Church of England. Lindsay outlined the need for a new style suited to the present epoch on

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108 Incomplete letter [to John Henry Newman from John Pollen], 62, Rathmines [Road, Dublin], 10 February [1856]. MS. 17906/5, fols. 29–30. *PA*.

109 *Letters and Diaries* 17, 4. See Kane, 'John Henry Newman's Catholic University Church revisited', 20.

110 First suggested in Kane, 'Newman's Catholic University Church', 112; see also 'John Henry Newman's Catholic University Church revisited', 20.

the basis of an accretive understanding of architecture: a modified form of Gothic might be acceptable, just as medieval Gothic had adapted the Lombard style, and the Lombard style had modified the Byzantine and so on. Wiseman responds pithily with a challenge in relation to Pugin's revival of Gothic churches for Catholics and his own desire for a Catholic school of painting in England, asking 'What chance is there for Christian painting in the Church which has not yet raised fitting walls on which it can be executed?' Newman seems to have responded to this prompt in his creation of a flat-walled basilica adorned with such archaising Christian history paintings. In doing so he had fulfilled in part Wiseman's wish that Catholics would show the public what good Christian painting was 'just as the King of Bavaria has done at Munich'. Wiseman had posed the challenge to the Catholic Church in the British Isles, saying 'let us throw open one good church, glowing from its ceiling to its lower panelling, not with diaper and mere colour, not even with single figure in separate compartments, but with a series of large and simple histories', to show that such forms of beauty and the desire for 'better things' in terms of Catholic aesthetics belonged not to the past but to the present and future.[111] It was Newman who took up the gauntlet.

Like the basilican design, marbles and gilded woodwork, the paintings continued the visual appeal to the apostolic authority of Rome through history. Their appeal to early Italian masters and to subjects pertaining to the early history of the church was intended, according to Pollen, to create an analogy between the work of the university and the activities of the early Church and between their contexts. He said to Newman, 'I hope you will like the choice for a University Ch. As we mean to smash modern Heathenism under the Communion and in the name of Peter …'[112] This sentiment should be expanded to our understanding of the structure and decoration of the church as a whole, as argued in the previous chapter, which appealed to Rome and the early Church at every turn, by means of its Romano-Byzantine design, to show how the university and the early Church related to their 'heathen' contexts. Each element of the church was perceived as meaningful in relation to the environment within which the university operated.

Wendel Meyer notes that when Newman first visited Rome as an Anglican priest in 1833, he was anguished, in being at once attracted to the ancient apostolic inheritance manifested in the Christian monuments

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111 Wiseman, 'Christian art', 488, 506, 515.
112 Letter [to John Henry Newman] from John Pollen, Worcester, 29 September 1855. MS. 17906/5, fols. 18–19. *PA*.

there and repulsed by the contemporary devotional culture of the Roman Catholic Church.[113] Meyer convincingly charts how Newman's response to the early burial sites in the catacombs evolved between this first visit there as an Anglican priest and his second trip in 1846, shortly after his conversion, with these tensions lessened by his becoming Catholic.[114] Newman had come to accept Rome as the custodian of the 'type' of the ancient church which had evolved through Catholic history. This idea permeates the architecture and colourful decoration of the Dublin church, from its basilican form to its marbles, paintings and emulations of mosaic. At each opportunity the authority of papal Rome – founded upon the history of the early Church and continued through history to the present day – was communicated, clearly conveying the authority behind the university. These stylistic choices were not made in a vacuum, however, and the full significance of University Church can only be accessed within the larger context of medieval revivalism occurring in Great Britain and Ireland at the time.

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113 He attempted to articulate and make sense of these conflicting thoughts and emotions upon his return to England in his writing. See, for example, J. H. Newman, 'Home thoughts abroad', *British Magazine* V (January 1834), 1–11.
114 Meyer, 'A tale of two cities'.

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Newman and medieval revivalism in England and Ireland

By the 1840s, the neoclassicism of the eighteenth century was being superseded across Europe by the widespread use of neo-medieval forms in architecture. The evolution of nineteenth-century historicist architecture cannot be analysed in depth here, but the significance of Newman's church must be understood in relation to Victorian revivalist architectures. Indeed, University Church cannot be understood apart from Newman's background in the Oxford Movement and the separate, but related, surge in medieval revivalism in architecture.[1] In particular, the Dublin church can be more fully appreciated in relation to the earlier Church of St Mary and St Nicholas erected in a Gothic revival style for Newman by architect Henry Underwood (1804–1852) in Littlemore, Oxford, between 1835–6 (Figure 4.1).[2] Both were precocious buildings in the Byzantine and Gothic revivals, respectively, and Newman's theological thought also contributed indirectly but substantially to the evolution of the Gothic revival in architecture, perhaps ironically since Newman is generally perceived to have been utilitarian about revivalist styles of architecture. The differences in Newman's building outputs can be explained by Newman's abiding conviction concerning ecclesiastical architecture – that it needed to be contextual.

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1   Limited revivals of Gothic architecture can be traced back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. See Girouard, *Elizabethan Architecture*, 426–30; Friedman, *The Eighteenth Century Church*, esp. 229. Gothic revivalism dramatically increased in the nineteenth century. On the Gothic revival, see, selectively, Clark, *The Gothic Revival*; Boex, *From Gothic Revival to Functional Form*; White, *The Cambridge Movement*; Webster and Elliott, *'A Church as it Should Be'*; Bradley, 'The Englishness of Gothic'; Hall, *Gothic Architecture*, 7–26; Hill, *God's Architect*; Levine, *Modern Architecture*, 116–18; Bremner, *Imperial Gothic*; Whyte, 'Ecclesiastical Gothic revivalism'; Fisher, *'Gothic for Ever'*; De Maeyer and Verpoest, *Gothic Revival*.
2   Howell, 'Newman's church at Littlemore'; Salesian Fathers, *Newman and Littlemore*.

The Oxford Movement and Gothic revival architecture

The ambition of the Oxford Movement in the 1830s to reform the Church of England through recovering its apostolic heritage and reincorporating ancient rituals and traditions coincided with the Gothic revival in architecture. Key figures within and outside of these two great Victorian revivals varied in how they perceived the two movements to relate to one another, but there were certainly deep connections between the two. A famous early attempt to concretely unite the two, albeit negatively, was a sermon delivered in 1844, entitled 'The "restoration of churches" is the restoration of popery', by Rev. Francis Close of Cheltenham (1797–1882), who saw the revival of the medieval style as going hand in hand with a move towards a higher ecclesiology and ultimately Roman Catholicism.[3] Others, such as John Mason Neale (1818–1866) – one of the founders of the influential Cambridge Camden Society, a seminal group for the Gothic revival – asserted that 'the Tract writers missed one great principle, namely the influence of Aestheticks'.[4] For Augustus Welby Pugin (1812–1852) – the famous convert to Catholicism because of his high ecclesiology, who became the controversial figurehead of the Gothic revival in architecture – his faith and its expression in the building of Gothic churches were inseparable.[5] In his famous *Contrasts* of 1841, Pugin argued that 'the triumphs of Christian truth' – a truth that was for him inherently Catholic – could be experienced through the symbolism of medieval ecclesiastical buildings: Christian instruction was received through their structural and visual elements and furnishings.[6] His conviction, shared by many Victorians, that a society's beliefs were embodied in the buildings erected, became the foundation for the political and theological understanding and use of architectural styles.[7]

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3 Close, *The 'Restoration of Churches'*. On the ecclesiological origins of Gothic revivalism in Victorian society, see Brooks and Saint, *The Victorian Church*.

4 Letter from Neale to Benjamin Webb (1844) in Lawson, *Letters*, 70. On Neale, see Chandler, *The Life and Work*. On Webb, his co-founder, see Crook, 'Benjamin Webb'.

5 Gwynn, *Lord Shrewsbury, Pugin*; Stanton, *Pugin*; Hill, *God's Architect;* Fisher, *'Gothic for Ever'*. On the reception of Pugin in his lifetime, see Curl, *Victorian Architecture*, chs. 2–4. St Giles', Cheadle, Staffordshire, 1840–6, intended as an emulation of an English medieval parish church from around 1300, is seen as Pugin's quintessential legacy church and the epitomic expression of English Catholicism, although he and his designs came into controversy and conflict with fellow Catholics due to his disregard for Counter-Reformation liturgical requirements. See Pugin, *A Treatise on Chancel Screens*. For discussion and further bibliography, see Lepine, 'Theology and threshold'.

6 Typified in Pugin, *Contrasts*, esp. 2–6; *An Apology*; *The Present State. Contrasts* was first published in 1836 but revised substantially and reissued in 1841. See also Bright, 'A reconsideration'; Patrick, 'Newman, Pugin and Gothic', 185–6; Curl, *English Victorian Churches*; Crook, *The Dilemma of Style*, 42–68.

7 Pugin, *An Apology*, 72.

The nineteenth century became a time of generative foment in terms of church building in medieval styles as part of a call to a purer religion in the face of social upheaval. Across Europe, neo-medieval styles were also being used in the creation of modern national identities, with buildings becoming agents of societal and religious change.[8]

Pugin was connected for a time to the Cambridge Camden Society, founded in 1839 in Cambridge and later renamed the Ecclesiological Society, which agreed that religious truth could be discerned and indeed experienced by means of medieval Gothic architecture.[9] The Cambridge Camden Society and the similar, but more liberal, Oxford Society for Promoting the Study of Gothic Architecture, formed in the same year, both championed expressing true Christian architectural form under the influence of Tractarian theology and the belief that Christian architecture held great communicative and experiential power in the face of rising secularism and Nonconformism.[10] The societies differed in their nature until the reform of the Cambridge society from 1845 onwards brought them into closer alignment, when it moved beyond its initial rigid commitment to the conventions of the English middle pointed style of Gothic and opened itself to greater eclecticism by means of the incorporation of later styles, continental forms and polychromy, in what has been termed the 'High Victorian' style.[11]

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8   See Chapter 2. Commenting on André Couchaud's decision to write about medieval Greek buildings, rather than the Parthenon, in his *Choix d'églises byzantines en Grèce* of 1842, for example, its reviewer in *The Ecclesiologist* attributed his unexpected approach to this 'new growth of European feeling'. '*Choix d'églises byzantines en Grèce* par A. Couchaud, Architecte. Paris. Lenoir'. 1842, *The Ecclesiologist*, 1845, 222. On national identity and Gothic revival styles in Belgium, for example, see De Maeyer, 'The neo-Gothic in Belgium'.

9   Cambridge Camden Society, *A Hand-Book of English Ecclesiology*.

10 Scholarship on the buildings constructed by Nonconformists has increasingly demonstrated their engagement with revivalist styles too, however. See, for example, Binfield, 'We claim our part in the Great Inheritance'; Binfield, *The Contexting of a Chapel Architect*. On the history of the Oxford society, see Ollard, 'The Oxford Architectural'. On the Ecclesiologists, see Crook, 'Benjamin Webb'. On the fundamental differences initially between the societies, see Brownlee, 'The first High Victorians', 34–5.

11 The morphology of the so-called High Victorian, which has now been challenged, was defined by Thompson, *William Butterfield* and Muthesius, *The High Victorian*. See Chitty, 'John Ruskin, Oxford'; White, *The Cambridge Movement*. See particularly the schools of Street and Scott in relation to the incorporation of European sources and the development of the 'High Victorian' style. For a summary of the issues around periodisation and the so-called 'High Victorian', see Hall, '"Our own"', 63. For a summary of the debate concerning the extent of Ruskin's influence on the 'High Victorian Gothic', see Blau, *Ruskinian Gothic*, 6–7.

Newman and the accretive development of architecture

The greater eclecticism and innovation observed in Gothic revival architecture from the late 1840s onwards, beyond the close emulation of medieval forms, owed its origins to the concept of continuous iterative development in architecture – and specifically to the idea that all architecture emerged not by pure invention but by building innovatively upon existing traditions in response to the present age. Perhaps ironically this idea had emerged at Oxford and was connected to the thought of Newman – particularly his work on accretive development in theology which precipitated his conversion – when he was at the height of his influence there immediately prior to his move into the Catholic Church.

Newman's conversion to Catholicism was greatly informed by his conviction that Christian revelation evolved within the history of the Church.[12] In his last sermon at St Mary's in Oxford on 2 February 1843, entitled 'The theory of developments in religious doctrine', he outlined how the simple statements of truth in the New Testament necessitated development.[13] Ultimately, Newman came to the conclusion that this process of development had continued and was preserved by the Church which led him ineluctably towards Catholicism. Newman's views on accretive theology – articulated most fully in his *Development of Doctrine* which announced his conversion to the Catholic faith in 1845 – led him to the conclusion that the present Catholic Church was the final authority on the Christian faith, not the church of the past: antiquity was not the 'oracle of truth', as it was for the Via Media of the Anglican church.[14] As such, the expression of Christian truth was always rooted in the apostolic age for Newman, but it necessarily developed and expanded and was expressed in its present moment. David Brownlee has convincingly demonstrated how Newman's views on the development of doctrine influenced a generation of architects who were debating whether architecture should emulate past forms or whether continuous architectural development based on the innovative use of past forms should lead to something new for the present age.[15]

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12 On Newman's understanding of the place of history in the development of doctrine, see McCarren, 'Development of doctrine', 121–2; Merrigan, 'Résister à l'épreuve'.

13 Newman, 'The theory of developments in religious doctrine'. In *Sermons, Chiefly on the Theory of Religious Belief*, 317–18, 322.

14 Newman, *Apologia*, 144. See also Newman, *The 'Via Media'*.

15 On the 'High Victorian' and the developmental, see Brownlee, 'The first High Victorians'. Expanded in Hall, 'What do Victorian churches mean?'.

Brownlee charts how the accretive development of architecture was articulated most clearly in terms inspired by Newman for the first time by Edward Freeman in a paper given at the Oxford Society for Promoting the Study of Gothic Architecture in Lent Term of 1843, entitled 'On the progressive development of the several styles of architecture, and the connection of each with the spirit of the age in which it arose'.[16] Freeman, a leading member of the Oxford society, advocated thereafter for his view that, as Brownlee succinctly puts it, 'architecture was reshaped by unconscious forces to reflect the culture that produced it', and for Freeman and many others, ecclesiastical architecture in the Gothic style was the highest expression of architecture in this overtly Hegelian schema.[17] Architects such as Sir George Gilbert Scott (1811–1878) and his younger assistant George Edmund Street (1824–1881), championed this approach in their writings, and by the mid-1840s, an understanding of accretive development in architecture underpinned historicist approaches to modern architecture more generally until the early 1860s when interest in this approach waned.[18] Architectural theorists like Alexander Beresford Hope, who led the liberalisation of the more conservative Cambridge Camden Society, is credited with translating Freeman's ideas into the colourful stylistic synthesism of 'High Victorian' architecture.[19] In this way Beresford Hope led the transition of the conservative society to its more progressive form as the Ecclesiological Society, as it was renamed by 1846, in moving it beyond fidelity to the emulation of the quintessentially English middle Gothic style to a more eclectic approach to revivalist architecture.[20]

Building on Freeman's ideas of development, Beresford Hope turned these concepts into expressions of synthesis. This shift allowed

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16 Meeting, 22 March 1843, Oxford Society for Promoting the Study of Gothic Architecture, *Rules and Proceedings* (Lent Term, 1843), 11–14.

17 See Chapter 2. Brownlee, 'The first High Victorians', 36. Meeting, 12 November 1845, *Rules and Proceedings* (Michaelmas term, 1845), 24. See in particular Bremner and Conlin, 'History as form'.

18 Street, 'The true principles'. Street was also part of the Oxford Architectural Society, as its name was shortened to in 1848, but by this point the Cambridge Camden Society was similarly allied to these ideals after its reform from its original conservatism, being rebranded as the Ecclesiological Society in 1845–6. See Webb, 'On the adaptation'; 'Past and future developments'. For discussion, see Hall, '"Our own"'; 'The later Gothic revival', 224–5.

19 Brownlee charts how the development of these ideas around accretive development under Newman's influence within the Oxford Society for Promoting the Study of Gothic Architecture spread to the Cambridge Camden Society as it was being liberalised under the leadership of A. J. Beresford Hope. He also demonstrates how these ideas were translated into architectural expression definitively by William Butterfield at All Saints, Margaret Street.

20 The society had always embraced study of earlier and later iterations of the Gothic style and continental Gothic but desired to recommend one style for contemporary use. For discussion, see Hall, '"Our own"', esp. 68–73.

for the creative fusion of the early English Gothic with continental and later styles, with an emphasis on innovative building materials like tile and brick, pioneered by leading architects such as Scott, Street, William Butterfield (1814–1900) and John Loughborough Pearson (1817–1897).[21] The first full expression of such developmental historicist architecture wherein medieval forms were used to create something less conservatively nationalistic and more inherently modern, drawing upon continental influences and innovative materials, was Beresford Hope and Butterfield's design for All Saints', Margaret Street, London (1849–59). James Stevens Curl has called it 'the exemplary Ecclesiological building … its inventive architecture was based on a rich historical set of precedents, yet it could not be confused with a medieval church or damned as a mere copy'.[22] Newman's contribution in this regard is somewhat ironic, given that he distanced himself from and wrote disparagingly of the Margaret Street chapel and its 'extravagancies' in his personal correspondence.[23]

Newman's views on Gothic

Despite his thought being so deeply influential, Newman himself is most often seen as having been ambivalent in relation to revivalist architecture. Michael Hall argues that:

> Newman was the coolest about the Gothic Revival, because he had come to doubt that the authority it symbolized lay in the past: in other words, the whole idea of revival, as understood by A.W.N. Pugin and the ecclesiologists, was redundant.[24]

For Newman, the modern, rather than ancient, Catholic Church was the authority, preserving the truths of Christianity through time and allowing for their development – so it was more important to focus on the present than to desire to return to any idealised past. What is most intriguing, however, is that despite Newman's huge contribution to the historicist movement in architecture being largely unintended, in Dublin we find a use of historicist architecture that more closely endorsed his own views of accretive development, whether consciously intended

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21 Changes to the material conditions for architectural production were also central to driving ideas around 'development'. See Bremner, 'Material, movement and memory', 185.
22 Curl, *Victorian Architecture*, 68.
23 *Letters and Diaries* 12, 222.
24 Hall, 'What do Victorian churches mean?', 80.

Figure 4.1 Henry Underwood, Church of St Mary and St Nicholas, Littlemore, Oxford, built for John Henry Newman, 1835–6. Exterior view of the west façade. © OxMan/Alamy Stock Photo

or not. This was discussed in Chapter 2 as an inevitable outworking of his understanding of Catholicism, which informed every aspect of his faith and work, including his efforts at the Catholic university in Dublin, which the church was intended to symbolically represent. To understand this more fully, however, it is important to understand Newman's relationship to and opinions on ecclesiastical architecture more generally, which can be accessed through his attitude towards the Gothic revival.

Newman's earlier chapel – a small, aisleless Gothic revival structure built before his conversion – elicited critical responses as unabashed 'Popery' from those outside the Oxford Movement, but interpretations of Newman's intentions varied, precisely because Newman himself was not firmly allied to the principles of architectural revival. *The Ecclesiologist*, published by the Cambridge Camden Society, perceived the building as an expression of Pugin's Gothic – 'the first unqualified step to better things that England had long witnessed' – while others saw it as an outworking of the influence of Newman's friends, rather than his own

convictions.[25] Clergyman Thomas Mozley (1806–1893), Newman's brother-in-law and friend, writing in 1882, described 'Newman's own ideas of a village church' as 'simple, almost utilitarian. So little part had he in the great ecclesiological and ritual revival … All he wanted at Littlemore was capacity and a moderate cost'.[26] Indeed, the prioritisation of capacity and cost continued in all his building endeavours thereafter, but the symbolic and affective value of architecture, once kept in their place, were not ignored by Newman, even at Littlemore.

The church as built had a simple rectangular ground plan, measuring 60 × 25 ft (18.3 × 7.6 m). It had a triplet of lancet windows in the east end, and lancet windows punctuated its side walls. A window with rudimentary tracery surmounted the west door. Newman, keenly aware of the context in which he was building, was somewhat surprised to find that the arcade underneath the windows on the interior of the east wall was quite prominent, rather than being executed in the 'alto-relief' he had envisaged, and he had concerns that it might become 'too much of a thing' because of this.[27] William Whyte has demonstrated Newman's close supervision of the design at Littlemore and his symbolic, almost sacramental, understanding of its architectural features, however, such as the three windows over the altar which, he said, could typify the Trinity.[28] In 1839, in a sermon entitled 'The visible Church, an encouragement to faith', Newman made clear his position on 'the help given to us by sensible objects', demonstrating his increasingly elevated ecclesiology:

> … the ordinances which we behold, force the unseen truth upon our senses. The very disposition of the building, the subdued light, the aisles, the Altar, with its pious adornments, are figures of things unseen, and stimulate our fainting faith.[29]

25 'Views and details of Littlemore church near Oxford', *The Ecclesiologist*, 1845, 32–3. Some historians have even interpreted the building as the 'accidental' use of Gothic and as being decidedly 'unecclesiological'. For discussion, see White, *The Cambridge Movement*, 23; Stanton, *The Gothic Revival*, 22–5; Hitchcock, *Early Victorian Architecture* I, 108; Chapman, *Faith and Revolt*, 229; Whyte, *Unlocking the Church*, 2–10, 31–8. James Patrick argues that 'Littlemore was the building in which Tractarian theology, the Gothic Revival, and Pugin's theorizing were first conjoined'. Patrick, 'Newman, Pugin', 187.

26 Mozley, *Reminiscences* I, 345–6.

27 Letter to James Bowling Mozley, 10 July 1835. *Letters and Diaries* 5, 321.

28 Newman, *Sermons 1824–43* IV, 236–43. Discussed in Whyte, *Unlocking the Church*, 33–4. See also Herring, *The Oxford Movement*, 74–5.

29 Newman, 'Sermon 17. The visible Church an encouragement to faith', in *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, 251.

Littlemore was a significant building for Ecclesiology, even though Newman was somewhat 'ambivalent' about the Gothic revival.[30] Indeed, Newman would eventually disagree significantly with Pugin, precisely because Newman prioritised pragmatic and liturgical over symbolic concerns.[31] From September 1846 until Christmas 1847, Newman was in Rome awaiting assignment in England following his conversion. Having been made an Oratorian, he began to consider building his Birmingham Oratory. Writing to Bishop Wiseman on 23 February 1847, he said:

> … its structure must be different from any thing ecclesiastical hitherto built in England … It must be a building for preaching and music; not an open roof certainly, no skreen. I am afraid I shall shock Pugin. As it will be used only in the evening, it need not have many windows, and I should be much against spending money on outside decoration; nay inside, I don't mind its being almost a barn, as it is a place for *work*.[32]

Newman was resolute in his opinion that aesthetic convictions should not be confused with doctrinal matters and that other styles were appropriate for use, despite his continued esteem for the Gothic style. He was also uncompromising in his prioritisation of the present liturgical requirements of the Catholic Church, which entailed a clear view of the Eucharistic ritual. Indeed, Pollen noted greater capacity and unimpeded visibility as key advantages of the basilican type in comparison with other styles.[33] Newman embraced a symbolic and affective approach to architecture in keeping with the wider context of the nineteenth century – noting already in his 1839 sermon the power of hearing and seeing in the ecclesiastical context – but he rejected Pugin's opinion that truth was conveyed by means of a single style. Newman found it unacceptable that Pugin identified 'love of Gothic art with orthodoxy, and love of classical or ancient Italian art with heresy'.[34]

Pragmatism defined Newman's approach to all his building endeavours and for each church he required a utilitarian space for

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30   Howell, 'Newman's church', 52.

31   Hall, '"Our own"', 64–6. Hall draws attention to the irony that it was Pugin who was first able to put ideas of architectural development, which were influenced by Newman's concept of accretive theology, into effect.

32   *Letters and Diaries* 12, 52.

33   Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 144.

34   *Letters and Diaries* 13, 461. Discussed at length in Patrick, 'Newman, Pugin', 206. For a more recent treatment of the issues between Newman and Pugin, see Nicholls, *Unearthly Beauty*, 245–58.

preaching, music and ritual at a modest cost. Newman also insisted on building in Dublin, 'a large barn' and to 'decorate it in the style of a Basilica, with Irish marbles and copies of standard pictures'.[35] It is interesting that Newman's repeated references to the idea of a barn in relation to ecclesiastical architecture resonate with the assessment of the early Christian basilica by Pollen's uncle, architect Charles Robert Cockerell, who damningly described it as 'nothing more than a mighty barn' in a lecture at the Royal Academy in 1843.[36] It seems that the term may have had wider currency in the debates concerning the suitability of architectural styles, and Newman appears to use it intentionally, and perhaps even defiantly, to assert his ultimate prioritisation of a pragmatic and open architecture. Newman was attuned also, however, to the nuances of style and meaning, and to the role of ecclesiastical art and architecture 'in inculcating a loyal and generous devotion to the Church in the breast of the young'.[37] Guy Nicholls has recently provided the first in-depth treatment of beauty and aesthetics in Newman's thought, wherein he outlines Newman's caution around beauty, including architectural splendour, and his conviction that architecture should above all be purposeful, used as a tool in aiding the faithful to strive ever closer to God.[38] Indeed, the idea of 'functional beauty', encapsulates Newman's attitude to aesthetics and the arts more broadly and to church building in particular.

For Newman, the visual arts were:

> … high ministers of the Beautiful and the Noble … special attendants and handmaids of Religion; but it is equally plain that they are apt to forget their place, and, unless restrained with a firm hand, instead of being servants, will aim at becoming principals.[39]

On account of this, Newman valued medieval styles with a less polished appearance – in a more 'rudimental state', such as Gothic – because they had 'so little innate vigour and life in them, that they are in no danger of going out of their place, and giving the law to Religion'.[40] Later naturalistic styles, particularly those of the Renaissance, seemed

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35 Newman, *My Campaign* I, 294.
36 Cockerell, RIBA Archive, Coc\1\107\5, 15, cited in Karydis, 'Discovering the Byzantine art of building', 3.
37 *Letters and Diaries* 15, 560.
38 Nicholls, *Unearthly Beauty*, esp. 248–54.
39 Newman, *Idea*, 78.
40 Newman, *Idea*, 78–9.

by contrast often to pursue beauty and genius in their own right.[41] In this, Newman was aligned to the sentiment of Ruskin who defined noble ornamentation – associated with medieval work which evolved from natural forms – as 'the expression of man's delight in God's work'. Ruskin contrasted this with 'ignoble ornamentation', which he associated with the Renaissance and classicism, as delighting only in itself and its mimetic mastery.[42] Following Ruskin, Pollen defined the superiority of the Byzantine capital and its comparatively rougher execution, as stemming from its 'delight in observing the fresh joyousness of living vegetation'.[43]

Newman valued the concept and appearance of Gothic architecture as 'the growth of an idea … as harmonious and as intellectual as it is graceful'.[44] Despite what reason told him, however, Newman was torn in terms of his own aesthetic preferences because of his strong emotional response to neoclassical architecture, saying 'however my reason may go with Gothic, my heart has ever gone with Grecian', by which he meant classical, and he robustly challenged Pugin's dismissal of the architecture of Rome as 'pagan'.[45] Indeed, after his conversion to Catholicism when Newman felt somewhat more at ease in his relationship to art and architecture, he admitted that Trinity Chapel, Oxford, completed in 1694 on a rectangular ground plan in a restrained neoclassical style with Renaissance and Baroque elements, was the building he loved 'more than any other building'.[46] The basilican style in Dublin may have allowed him a more classicising style without the attendant risks of self-glorification attached to later styles.

Created beauty of all types, including music and the visual arts, came with potential peril to a greater or lesser extent for Newman, and he considered that all the arts should be treated with a certain amount of wariness. He perceived potential risks with Gothic architecture in this regard also, despite its strength as an idea, admitting in his Dublin lectures, delivered in 1852 and now part of *The Idea of a University*, that 'Gothic, is endowed with a profound and commanding beauty such as no

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41 Newman, *Idea*, 79. See particularly his sermon on 'The Mission of St. Philip Neri – Part 1'. *Sermons Preached on Various Occasions* (hereafter *OS*) 12, 205–7.
42 Ruskin, *Works* 9, 253.
43 Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 134.
44 Newman, *Idea*, 82.
45 *Letters and Diaries* 11, 252. See also 13, 460. On his challenge to Ambrose Lisle Phillipps, Pugin's supporter, on the architecture of Rome, see *Letters and Diaries* 12, 216.
46 Letter to Henry Wilberforce. *Letters and Diaries* 11, 252. See also Kemp, *The Chapel of Trinity College*.

other style possesses'.[47] Its persuasive eloquence meant for Newman that it had great potential to be used 'as an end rather than as a means' for the revelation of divine truth, as with the architecture of the Renaissance. Furthermore, in its English context in particular, much more so than in the Irish context according to Newman, it had the danger of becoming an 'emblem and advocate of a past ceremonial or an extinct nationalism'.[48] Indeed, one of the initial concerns of the Cambridge Camden Society had been to agree upon a medieval architecture for emulation that was not only perfect in form, but one that was also characteristically English, and John Mason Neale recommended a 'nationality of style'.[49] In describing the superiority of the Gothic style, Freeman said it 'should be endeared to us above every other [style] by its intrinsic beauty and its religious and national associations'.[50]

Newman was very aware of what was happening across Europe, saying that the 'revival of an almost forgotten architecture, which is at present taking place in our own countries, in France, and in Germany, may in some way or other run away with us into this or that error, unless we keep a watch over its course'.[51] Indeed, in the first letter that Newman sent in November 1854 to Mr La Primaudaye, father of Maria La Primaudaye, Pollen's then fiancée and future wife, broaching the idea of Pollen becoming Professor of the Fine Arts, he indicated that he hoped employing Pollen would mean avoiding the 'extravagances of the Ultra-Puginians'.[52] He also expressed his hope that Pollen would teach on 'the connection of the Fine Arts with national character and political institutions', betraying the fact that he understood artistic styles along the same lines as his Victorian peers. Newman knew he was building in the context of a revivalism variously connected to doctrinal matters and issues of nationalism and that his buildings would be 'read' by others, but he was remarkably consistent in his conviction that architecture should respond to its context and espouse a pragmatic beauty suited to the rituals of the contemporary church.

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47 Newman, *Idea*, 82. On Newman's views on Gothic architecture, see Brownlee, 'The first High Victorians', 35; Middleton, *Newman & Bloxam*, 31–60; Howell, 'Newman's church', 52.
48 Newman, *Idea*, 82.
49 Neale, *Hierologus*, 2. On nationalism and imperialism in relation to the Gothic revival, see Bremner, 'Nation and Empire'. This concern for an English national form was discussed by A. J. Beresford Hope in 'The present state'. For further discussion, see Bremner, *Imperial Gothic*, 186–7; Collins, *Changing Ideals*, 100–5; Bradley, 'The Englishness of Gothic'.
50 Freeman, *History*, 28.
51 Newman, *Idea*, 82.
52 *Letters and Diaries* 16, 301.

Speaking of Pugin's Gothic in his personal correspondence with prominent Catholic convert Ambrose Lisle Phillipps (1809–1878), a firm supporter of Pugin, Newman expressed his admiration for what Pugin had done for Catholicism and its architecture, but stressed that Gothic architecture was only in need of revival because it had in fact died out hundreds of years earlier. The ritual of the church had since evolved and so the style was now, according to Newman 'like an old dress, which fitted a man well twenty years back but must be altered to fit him now', saying 'I wish to wear it, but I wish to alter it, or rather I wish him to alter it' in order that it might provide an architecture for the present rituals of the church which had now developed under the care of Rome. Particularly pressing in this regard and in opposition to Pugin's Gothic, was the need for a visible altar.[53]

In providing a 'living architecture of the 19th century' suited to hosting the 'living ritual of the 19th century' through a basilican architecture evolved and adapted to meet present needs, University Church became an embodiment of Newman's understanding of the accretive development of Christianity.[54] Roderick O'Donnell attributes Newman's use of his own money to build a 'Byzantine' style university church in Dublin to 'a direct challenge to the hegemony of the Gothic Revival', and although it is clear that Newman did appreciate both the Gothic and the neoclassical, it is also evident that he opted for a different style in his Dublin context for a public expression of the university, and not only because of practical concerns.[55]

The politics of architectural style in Ireland

Newman was uncompromisingly contextual and pragmatic in his approach to architectural styles. In his famous novel *Loss and Gain*, written in 1848, a character named Campbell is asked, 'Which are you for, Gothic … or Roman?' and he responds, 'For both in their place'.[56] Newman was not necessarily opposed to using Gothic in the Irish context. A letter on 27 November 1854 to John Stanislas Flanagan shows him bargaining for funding from the university finance committee to build a temporary chapel next to his house at 6 Harcourt

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53 *Letters and Diaries* 12, 215.
54 Letter to Ambrose Philips, 15 June 1848. *Letters and Diaries* 12, 221–2.
55 O'Donnell, 'An apology', 45; O'Donnell, 'Louis-Joseph Duc in Birmingham'.
56 Newman, *Loss and Gain*, 285.

Street, in a plain Gothic style.[57] For the public expression of his university, however, a different style was chosen; Newman admired Gothic intellectually and connected emotionally to neoclassical styles of architecture but, in this context, Romano-Byzantine was deemed most appropriate for a public embodiment of his Catholic university. Styles needed to respond to present requirements, and in Dublin the needs were those of the university. Medieval styles had much to recommend them, but their use should be to create something relevant to their present context and its living rituals. In religion and architecture alike, Newman endorsed the need for innovation in the context of sacred continuity: indeed, celebrating the glorious golden age of the early Irish church, he noted that 'The past never returns; the course of events, old in its texture, is ever new in its colouring and fashion.' Newman argued that England and Ireland were no longer the same, and his desire was not to emulate or to return to a bygone era but to demonstrate that Rome was where it had always been and that the two islands had received their mandate from that living tradition then as now.[58]

Appeals to the past were only valued for their contribution to the present by Newman.[59] His Dublin church became an embodiment of his accretive understanding of the Catholic faith, as a contemporary expression of and response to an ancient basilica; it was a preservation and evolution of type, whether this was consciously intended or not. University Church emerged as a 'living architecture' that had evolved from the ancient basilicas of the late classical and Byzantine traditions. It was a rich palimpsest of Church tradition, each layer a physical outworking of Newman's understanding of Christian revelation which defined his faith. Even prior to his conversion, Newman had seen churches as an expression of the 'stability and permanence' of religion through time, considering that because of this it was only right to make them 'enduring, and stately, and magnificent, and ornamental'.[60] While an un-adapted Gothic represented the church frozen in its medieval variant, the basilica adapted to present needs represented an enduring and living embodiment of the continuity of the church.

Newman was acutely aware of the politics of style and the authority that form carried in his day: he understood that their choice of architectural style carried ideological implications with great potential for

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57 *Letters and Diaries* 16, 308–9.
58 Newman, *Idea*, 17–18.
59 See King, 'Reviving the past'.
60 'The Gospel palaces', preached soon after Littlemore had been consecrated. 13 November 1836. *Parochial and Plain Sermons* vi, 273, 271.

communication and agency. Despite the widespread acceptance and employment of the Gothic style in Catholic ecclesiastical architecture in Ireland, the distinctive Romano-Byzantine style may also have been selected in Dublin because the buildings of the 'Godless' Queen's Colleges in Belfast, Cork and Galway – which essentially embraced the secular approach to education developed in Europe during the Revolutionary period – had been erected in the Gothic style.[61] The Queen's Colleges espoused professional education for the emergent middle classes, focusing on practical subjects such as the sciences, rather than traditional subjects like theology in a non-denominational context. They were based upon a liberal political philosophy, and in many ways the use of Perpendicular Gothic for their buildings was ironic. Indeed, the colleges invited censure from *The Ecclesiologist* as a result, which noted unfavourably that 'all these structures have put on the garb of Christian architecture' and that, of the three, the college in Cork is the best but the 'other two are positively bad'.[62] The Queen's College in Cork, 1846–9, designed by Benjamin Woodward shortly after he had joined the Cork-based firm of Sir Thomas Deane in 1845, was clearly indebted to Pugin, a great influence on Woodward. Pugin had called in 1843 for the rejuvenation of college architecture precisely along these lines, with all the 'scholastic gravity of character, the reverend and solemn appearance, that is found in the ancient erections'.[63]

By 1837 there were ten Catholic cathedrals established in Ireland, eight of which were also built in the Gothic style.[64] Puginesque Gothic had taken hold in the erection of Irish Catholic churches more generally, particularly after the famine.[65] Pugin had also been commissioned in 1845 to draw up a scheme in the Gothic revival style for St Patrick's College in Maynooth, the national seminary.[66] The use of Gothic was also connected to increasing Irish nationalism and the desire of Catholics to recuperate what had been lost to Protestantism, given that many of

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61 Culler, *Imperial Intellect*, 125, 128.
62 'Irish colleges and lunatic asylums', *The Ecclesiologist*, 9 April 1849, 290.
63 Pugin, *An Apology*, 31.
64 See Sheehy, 'Irish church-building', 137–9. On the cathedrals of both denominations, see Galloway, *The Cathedrals*.
65 Pugin himself had come to Ireland and designed the cathedrals at Enniscorthy in 1839 and Killarney in 1842. By 1850, even *The Ecclesiologist* was warmly congratulating Pugin for advancing 'the true principles of Ecclesiology in Ireland'. 'Mr. Pugin and the rambler', *The Ecclesiologist*, April 1850, 299. See O'Donnell, 'An apology', 36; O'Donnell, 'The Pugins in Ireland', 52. Irish church building accelerated after the Catholic emancipation of 1829. Over 1800 Catholic churches were built in Ireland between 1800 and 1863. See Larkin, 'Economic growth', 858.
66 Corish, *Maynooth 1795–1995*.

Ireland's original medieval Gothic churches were now in the hands of the Church of Ireland.[67] For many Catholics, building in a Gothic revival style was a manifestation of religious revival.[68] In Dublin, however, Catholic churches had generally been built in the neoclassical style between 1820 and 1840 to differentiate them from the prominent Gothic Church of Ireland churches there and to signal clearly their connection to Rome.[69]

Cullen, an ultramontane whose interests were firmly allied to those of Rome, accepted the inevitable burgeoning of Gothic revival architecture in Ireland under the influence of Pugin. But later, when the opportunity presented itself in the 1873 commission of the Dublin seminary building, he sent the architect James Joseph McCarthy (1817–1881) straight to Rome to obtain knowledge of Roman classical models.[70] Irish communities outside of Ireland, were also in tune with such architectural politics and the authority of form in conveying identity. In 1853, McCarthy had provided the design for the Church of St Patrick in St John's, Newfoundland (opened in 1881), in a decidedly Puginesque Gothic mode which was closely informed by medieval Irish monuments. The church was intended as an embodiment of Irish-Catholicism in the city, and its style contrasted intentionally with the Basilica-Cathedral of St John the Baptist (1841–1855) there, which in its homage to the church of St John in the Lateran, reconstructed in the Baroque style, emphasised the 'Roman-ness' of the Catholic Church.[71]

The use of historicist styles in Ireland was potentially loaded in terms of meaning and identity. Alongside avoiding Gothic, Newman seems also to have avoided the creation of something that emulated contemporary Roman architecture too closely, despite his own personal preferences and his defence of the classical style of the See of Peter in the face of Pugin. This was possibly to avoid exacerbating the suspicions of papal interference in the Irish context that had led some of the Irish bishops and nationalists to resist the opening of the Catholic university in the first place. A Romano-Byzantine style was used deftly against this backdrop in Dublin to differentiate the building – and to articulate

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67   On the increasingly political interpretation of Gothic in Ireland in the nineteenth century, see NicGhabhann, *Medieval Ecclesiastical Buildings*.

68   O'Dwyer, 'A Victorian partnership'.

69   Sheehy, 'Irish church-building', 139. On the building of 'magnificent' Catholic church projects across Ireland between 1850 and 1900 that stylistically referenced both the cathedrals of medieval France and the classicism of Catholic Rome, see NicGhabhann, 'I have loved'. NicGhabhann moves away from ideas of eclecticism to intentionality, focusing on the rebuilding of a ruptured Catholic architectural tradition in Ireland.

70   Sheehy, 'Irish church-building', 143. On Cullen and Irish nationalism, see Steele, 'Cardinal Cullen'.

71   This is the argument of Thurlby, 'St. Patrick's'.

persuasively and clearly what was unique about the Catholic university, without aggravating existing tensions.

It is clear through Newman's original selection of the existing neoclassical church of St Audoen's for use as a university church that he wished not to employ the Gothic style for a public articulation of the aims and essence of his university in Dublin. When faced with a new site to build upon, however, the use of the Romano-Byzantine style was deemed a more appropriate model for the Irish context, intended as a public defence of Catholicism which skilfully avoided imbrication with any of the nationalist associations connected to the Gothic revival, while also avoiding ultramontanist insinuations. The other main alternative to the Gothic revival and neoclassical styles at this time in the British Isles would have been the Neo-Romanesque. Although University Church benefits from being contextualised within the revival of round-arched styles that was occurring as part of the Romanesque revival, it is clear that Newman and Pollen did not choose to create a church in this style and that they had a very clear vision, informed by both practical and ideological needs. In response to the complex particularities of their context and the politics of style at that moment in Ireland, they chose to draw upon Roman and Byzantine basilicas in an expression that referenced early medieval Christianity.

Romanesque revival in England and Ireland

> The architects of the different nations of Europe, in the first instance, imitated the later works of the Romans, but in the course of time they remodelled these into a style peculiarly their own, which style is known by the name Romanesque, Lombardic, or (though erroneously) Byzantine. In the working out of this change each nation took its own course, and the architectural styles resulting from this change were widely different in different countries. During the twelfth century, however, each began to introduce the pointed arch, accompanied by other features novel to the established manner.
>
> George Gilbert Scott, 1878[72]

As in French and German scholarship, it took time for the architects and theorists of Great Britain and Ireland to disentangle and understand

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72 Scott, *Personal and Professional*, 125.

the post-classical, round-arched styles of early medieval architecture that evolved from the Roman tradition. James Fergusson in his *Illustrated Handbook of Architecture* of 1855, discusses the difficulty of nomenclature in relation to the Romanesque and the Byzantine and the 'considerable confusion … introduced by hasty generalisation and ill-judged attempts to apply a system of names suited to preconceived ideas'.[73] Scholars did attempt to create a more systematic understanding of the evolution of medieval round-arched styles, primarily for the purposes of understanding the evolution of Gothic architecture and its relationship to the classical tradition.[74] Indeed, William Gunn (1750–1840) in his *Inquiry into the Origin and Influence of Gothic Architecture*, published in 1819 but completed by 1813, coined the term 'Romanesque' to describe the shift that had occurred during the reign of Constantine the Great to the arch supported by columns as the foundational architectural element, as opposed to the arches framed by engaged columns and entablatures, traditionally favoured by the Romans.[75] He termed this shift the 'Romanesque', framing it as a 'vitious deviation', to express derivation and decline and, most importantly, to chart an evolutionary trajectory between the classical and Gothic traditions. His term resonated with similar formulations across Europe. In 1818, French antiquarian and historian Charles-Alexis-Adrien Duhérissier de Gerville (1769–1853) coined the term 'architecture romane' – as opposed to 'roman' – to describe the degraded styles that evolved from Roman architecture, replacing 'meaningless' terms such as 'Norman' and 'Saxon'.[76] The German equivalent was 'romanisch', first used by Sulpiz Boisserée in 1811, which gradually replaced other terms, including the Rundbogenstil.[77]

As part of efforts to construct an evolutionary periodisation of architectural history, attempts were necessarily made to conceptualise the medieval round-arched styles that formed the bridge between the classical and the Gothic. In 1830, William Whewell (1794–1866), English polymath and Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, began to differentiate between the Byzantine and the Romanesque in his consideration of

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73 Fergusson, *The Illustrated Handbook* II, 474–5.
74 For a summary of Romanesque revivalism in Germany, France and England, see Germann, *Gothic Revival*, 47.
75 Gunn, *An Inquiry into the Origin*, 4–37. See also Germann, *Gothic Revival*, 44–5.
76 This was in a letter to philologist, archaeologist and historian August Le Prévost (1787–1859). See Germann, *Gothic Revival*, 45.
77 Describing the Roman and Byzantine origins of Romanesque architecture, Sulpiz Boisserée first used 'romanisch' in a letter to Goethe on 17 June 1811, but he did not use it again after that until 1823. Brownlee, 'Neugriechisch/Néo-Grec', 19.

German Gothic, and by 1854, English authors such as Wyatt and Waring had charted a clear path of historical stylistic influence and evolution from the Roman tradition to the various European Romanesque traditions, by means of Byzantine architecture as an intermediary style.[78] In this they were building on the clear differentiation of the European and Byzantine medieval styles found in Beresford Hope, Freeman and Lord Lindsay's histories, and the generative role that they posited for the eastern tradition. Pollen was clearly indebted to this understanding of architectural history too. Despite the clearer and more historically accurate understandings of round-arched architectures that began to emerge in scholarship by the mid-nineteenth century, the revivalist architectures that drew upon them still frequently evidenced ambiguity, particularly those belonging to the so-called Romanesque revival. This related to the equivocal nature of the idea of the Romanesque itself, which constituted a broad historical concept covering many regions and styles, and which was still at times conflated with or even called Byzantine by some until around the 1860s.[79]

Medieval round-arched architectures had been appreciated by antiquarians in the British Isles since the seventeenth century, particularly the great medieval monuments built in England, and isolated examples of Romanesque revival architecture can be found as far back as the eighteenth century.[80] The Gothic revival style found no real competitor in ecclesiastical design of the mid-nineteenth century in England, however, but the lesser Romanesque revival that took hold around this time in church architecture still forms an important component of historicist architecture in the British Isles, providing relevant context for the building of University Church, which in terms of the selection of the round arch and its practical motivations shared much in common with

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78 They saw Byzantine architecture, which itself developed out of the Roman tradition, from the time of Justinian in the sixth century until the eleventh century, to have exerted a huge influence on the Romanesque architectures of Italy, France and Germany. Wyatt and Waring, *The Byzantine and Romanesque*, esp. 10–15. See Whewell, *Architectural Notes*. This was followed soon after by James Fergusson, *The Illustrated Handbook* in 1855 who saw the 'Romanesque' or 'debased Roman', which included the early basilicas, as separating after the time of Justinian into the two great branches of Gothic and Byzantine, while the Romanesque continued in places like Rome, Pisa, Ravenna and Venice, see II, 477. He refers to what is now termed Romanesque in France and Germany as 'round arched Gothic styles'. II, 479.

79 English authors did at an early date recognise the broad and confusing use of the term Byzantine to refer to round-arched styles. See 'On the Romanesque Style', *Christian Remembrancer*, 576–83, whose author notes the generic use of the term Byzantine for pre-Gothic architecture as a whole encompassing Lombard, Norman etc.

80 See particularly St Peter's Church, Tickencoate, 1792, restored and almost entirely rebuilt in a Norman revival style by the architect Samuel Pepys Cockerell, funded by Miss Eliza Wingfield.

churches built in this style. Moreover, aside from University Church, aspects of early Christian basilican and Byzantine design manifested only marginally in the British Isles prior to the 1860s, and it was most often in a synthesis with the Romanesque style as part of generic pre-Gothic, 'round-arched' revivalist styles that variously incorporated expanses of unsculptured wall, colour and a basilican, rather than cruciform, plan.

An important example of such loosely conceived early buildings is the aisleless parish church of St Mary's, commissioned by Sara Losh (1785–1853) at Wreay, Cumbria, between 1840–2, which was inspired by the basilicas she had seen while travelling in Italy in 1817 (Figure 4.2).[81] Despite its simple basilican plan, Losh's church belongs more so to the Romanesque revival in its general aesthetic, through its stepped glazed 'arcading' on the gable of the west façade – reminiscent of decorative blind arcading, its stone-sculpted windows and main

Figure 4.2   St Mary's Church, Wreay, Cumbria, built for Sara Losh, 1840–2. Exterior view of the west façade. © The Carlisle Kid. Geograph, CC BY-SA 2.0. Available at https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/5353787

81 Uglow, 'Story of Sara Losh'.

portal, and its general impression of roughly hewn stone. Losh referred herself to its style as 'early Saxon or modified Lombard' – making clear both its English and continental inspiration.[82] It was described later by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, in 1869, as having a 'Byzantine' style, speaking to the ongoing complexities of understanding round-arched styles in the nineteenth century and the conflation of the Byzantine and the Romanesque.[83]

Losh's use of untrained local craftsmen, who executed a plethora of specimens of flora and fauna – from fir-cones and moths to barley – around the west end windows and doorway, instructed only by means of her own mouldings in clay, bears similarity to the practices of later architects inspired by Ruskin, such as Woodward at the Museum Building and Pollen at University Church, and later still those connected to the Arts and Crafts movement.[84] The precocity of the building is striking. Designed as a replacement for the dilapidated parish church in Wreay, Losh had offered to pay for the new church on the condition that she would be 'left unrestricted as to the mode of building it', in a move that is also very similar to Newman's own decision to finance the Dublin church himself.[85] Both instances speak to the increasingly ingrained expectation of the use of the Gothic revival style, deemed most suitable for ecclesiastical architectures. J. B. Bullen highlights the church's significance as 'one of the first of an important series of British "Early Christian" buildings which looked more to Continental than English models' – which provided a challenge to the burgeoning sense of Gothic's superiority.[86] University Church came within this general trajectory, but the styles of the two churches drew on different traditions within this and, as a result, looked very different.

Other important early projects seen as belonging to the idea of a Romanesque revival were similarly unique projects, some of which have detectable Byzantine elements in a manner reminiscent of the heterogenous Rundbogenstil of Bavaria and Prussia. The stylistically eclectic Christ Church, Streatham, designed by James William Wild between 1839–41 in the borough of Lambeth, contributed greatly towards the effort to reintroduce polychromy into construction. It too had a basilican plan, but it espoused polychromatic

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82 For detailed consideration of her sources, see Bullen, 'Sara Losh', 680–1.
83 Letter to his mother, 1869. Doughty and Wahl, *Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti* II, 716.
84 Bullen, 'Sara Losh', discusses the sculptural programme in detail in this regard.
85 Carlisle Record Office, PR 118/30, MS transcript by the Rev. Richard Jackson of an account by Sara Losh of the building of St Mary's, 4. Cited in Bullen, 'Sara Losh', 679.
86 Bullen, 'Sara Losh', 680.

brickwork and incorporated elements that could be considered early Christian, Romanesque, Byzantine or Islamic.[87] The most significant Romanesque revival church in England was possibly that built by statesman Sidney Herbert (1810–1861), 1st Baron Herbert of Lea, and his mother Catherine Worozow (1783–1856). The Church of St Mary and St Nicholas, Wilton, begun in 1841 and completed in 1845, was constructed in an Italian Romanesque style on the outside with an interior that is Romanesque but with an early Christian feel due to its open basilican plan, achieved by means of the height and slim proportions of its columns.[88] Among these early round-arched churches, Herbert's church, by architects Thomas H. Wyatt and David Brandon, drew most appreciation, with its drawings exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1840 and 1842 and a model of the church displayed at the Great Exhibition of 1851.[89]

Aidan Whelan has recently drawn attention to a series of early buildings by George Gilbert Scott, from 1837–49, that espoused constructional polychromy, some of which predate Wild's church. Most of these buildings employed brick, demonstrating the close connection between this material and architectural polychromy, both constructional and applied; since brick does not easily lend itself to ornamentation without the addition of stone or brick of a different colour. Moreover, brick generates expanses of smooth unarticulated surface, including those of a curved disposition, that lend themselves to the application of decoration. Of particular interest is the eclectic church of Holy Trinity, Frogmore, Hertfordshire, 1841–2, designed by Scott for the vicar Marcus Richard Southwell in a Romanesque style, from flint and brick with panels of diapering in the blind arches that flank the central window on the western façade.[90] This building may itself have been influenced by Pugin's Church of St James, Reading, 1837–40, one of only three churches that Pugin built in a Romanesque style, all in his early career. Pugin's building, which may have resulted from the desire to resonate with the style of the ruins of the earlier abbey on the site, itself demonstrates a use of constructional polychromy – albeit of a much more

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87 Hitchcock, *Early Victorian Architecture* I, 103 who declared it 'perhaps the most original of all Early Victorian Churches'; Crinson, *Empire Building*, 98–9; Jackson, 'Christ Church, Streatham'; 'Clarity or Camouflage?', 201–2; Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 109.

88 The chancel apse was eventually covered in neo-Byzantine mosaics in the early twentieth century by Gertrude Martin.

89 Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 193; Hitchcock, *Early Victorian Architecture* I, 97–127.

90 His experiments were not emulated. Whelan, 'George Gilbert Scott', 229–31. https://gilbertscott.org/holy-trinity-frogmore/.

restrained nature than Scott's building – through the addition of honey limestone features to the frit façade of the church.[91]

The Romanesque revival style attained a somewhat wider use in London because of the need to construct economical brick-built parish churches at pace, many of which were intended to help encourage order in the face of burgeoning urban populations in impoverished suburbs, most notably Bethnal Green.[92] In this regard, many of the Romanesque revival churches that sprang up in London in the 1840s were inspired by a rationale comparable to Prussian Rundbogenstil precedents, such as Schinkel's Vorstadtkirchen in the northern suburbs of Berlin, 1832–5.[93] In 1836, Bishop Charles James Blomfield (1786–1857) of London began his drive to establish 10 new parish churches in Bethnal Green, one of the most overcrowded areas of London, achieving the remarkable feat of erecting six Romanesque revival and four Gothic revival churches by the end of the 1840s.[94] The reasons for the obvious prioritisation of Romanesque in this context, for churches such as St Matthias, Bethnal Green (1848), was remarkably similar to the reasons for the employment of the basilican style in Dublin: it was less expensive, it allowed for the ease of brick construction and had greater capacity for painted decoration, along with being perceived as durable and beautiful.[95] The six Romanesque churches, again labelled inaccurately as Byzantine by the Church Commissioners, displayed a range of styles and features, but overall they were round-arched, brick-built edifices that drew on European sources, to the distaste of the Ecclesiologists.[96]

The visions for both relatively unique commissions for individual patrons and wider projects in London were informed by several seminal texts that were fundamental to the revival of round-arched architectures. *An Historical Essay on Architecture by the late Thomas Hope*, published posthumously by his son in 1835, played a key role in the stimulation of Lombard-inspired architecture in England, like Losh's church.[97] In this

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91   Whelan, 'George Gilbert Scott', makes this connection in note 46. https://www.crsbi.ac.uk/view-item?i=14288.

92   See Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 202–3.

93   See Chapter 2 for discussion.

94   For full discussion, see Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 201–8.

95   These reasons were articulated in a letter from London architect John Shaw to Blomfield. John Shaw, 'Letter on ecclesiastical architecture, as applicable to modern churches', addressed to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of London, quoted and discussed in Clarke, *Church Builders*, 42–3; Curran, *Romanesque Revival*, 206. An illustrated short article, 'St Matthias, Bethnal Green', was published in *The Illustrated London News*, 26 February 1848, 28, fig. 11.

96   Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 208.

97   See Bullen, 'Sara Losh', 682.

text, Hope influentially characterised the early medieval Italian style of architecture as a synthesis of Roman and Byzantine elements, and he also championed the early Christian basilican and Byzantine styles, as previously discussed. Similarly influential was Henry Gally Knight's later *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Italy from the Time of Constantine to the Fifteenth Century*, published in two volumes in 1843.[98] The illustrations in Gally Knight's text provided many of the source materials for Herbert's church in Wilton, for instance.[99]

The initial response of the Cambridge Camden Society to these churches, and to written endorsements of earlier round-arched styles more generally, such as Hope's text and artist and architectural historian John Louis Petit's (1801–1868) *Remarks on Church Architecture* (1841), was not favourable.[100] After an extended, rancorous debate, the Society announced in 1842 their verdict that:

> Gothic Architecture is, in the highest sense, the only Christian Architecture … The proposed introduction by Mr Petit and his followers of a new style, whether Romanesque, Byzantine, or Eclectic, is to be earnestly deprecated, as opening a door to the most dangerous innovations, and totally subversive of Christian Architecture.[101]

The study of Romanesque architecture was acceptable but advocating building in the style at this date was not. The perceived foreign nature of the continental influences that the creators of Romanesque revival churches in the 1840s were looking to were considered a threat to the English style of Gothic. However, after around 1846 as the Gothic movement opened up to continental sources, the Romanesque style gradually assumed more acceptance and interest as being suited to modern ecclesiastical architecture, framed at times as an expression of 'the purest spirit of Christianity' because of its comparatively more modest appearance.[102]

The Romanesque style, like the Byzantine, found somewhat greater success at an earlier date outside of ecclesiastical design, where

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98 Galley Knight, *The Ecclesiastical Architecture*.

99 Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 195.

100 Petit, *Remarks*.

101 'Romanesque and Catholic Architecture', *The Ecclesiologist*, October 1842, 5. This should be juxtaposed with more positive appraisals made elsewhere in the 1840s, discussed in Karydis, 'Discovering the Byzantine art of building'.

102 Philo Romanesque, 'The value of the Romanesque style', *The Builder* 7, 1 September 1849, 410–11.

Figure 4.3 Thomas Hopper, Penrhyn Castle, North Wales, built for George Hay Dawkins-Pennant, 1822–37. © Niamh Bhalla

ecclesiology and theological claims were not at stake. The style was used extensively, confidently and at great cost in projects like Penrhyn Castle in North Wales, rebuilt between 1822–37 by the well-known architect Thomas Hopper, in the form of a neo-Norman castle (Figure 4.3). The revivalist castle was built for George Hay Dawkins-Pennant (1764–1840), a plantation and slave owner and Member of Parliament who opposed the emancipation of enslaved people within the British Empire and received significant compensation for his Jamaican slaves when the Slavery Abolition Act was passed in 1833. His formidably large house, which belongs more so to the picturesque use of medieval styles, was thus built on a foundation of colonialist gains. Its vast scale, with its donjon modelled on Hedingham Castle in Essex, the fine quality of its masonry and its unabashed Romanesque style have been consistently noted.[103]

Although less overt, and coming later, Eve Blau has also detected a nod towards the Irish Romanesque style at the Museum Building in its monumentality, thickness of wall, round-arched fenestration, decorated piers and recessed voussoirs.[104] An increased awareness of Irish Romanesque structures accompanied the great attention being

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103 Haslam, Orbach and Voelcker, *Gwynedd*, 399.
104 Blau, *Ruskinian Gothic*, 33.

paid to medieval Gothic structures in Ireland under the influence of Pugin. Interest in medieval architecture in Ireland was also informed and stimulated by a resurgence in archaeological and antiquarian publications on Irish monuments in the 1830s and 40s, under the influence of burgeoning nationalism.[105] Pugin himself had spoken to the connection between Ireland's impressive Christian past, the visceral medieval ruins littered across Ireland's landscape and national pride, saying:

> … if the clergy and gentry of Ireland possessed one spark of real national feeling, they would revive and restore those solemn piles of buildings which formerly covered that island of saints, and which are associated with the holiest and most honourable recollections of its history. Many of these were indeed rude and simple; but, they harmonised most perfectly with the wild and rocky localities in which they were erected.[106]

Interestingly, Pugin continued on to note the financial benefits of drawing on native Irish architectural traditions – in comparison to any monstrous neoclassical alternative – making abundantly clear his position on the question of which style was most appropriate for Irish ecclesiastical architecture:

> The real Irish ecclesiastical architecture might be revived at a considerably less cost than is now actually expended on the construction of monstrosities; and an apathy of the clergy on this most important subject is truly deplorable.[107]

Pugin drew upon the medieval heritage of Ireland in his design for the Church of St Michael the Archangel, Gorey, Co. Wexford, designed in 1839 and built between 1839–42 – his first attempt to create something that would resonate with the Irish tradition, despite having limited exposure to Irish medieval architecture at this point in his career. The church constitutes another of the three occasions on which he designed in the Romanesque style in the early stages of his career, and it has been

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105 For example, Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, 1837; Petrie, *The Round Towers and Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, 1845. The Ordinance Survey was carried out between 1833 and 1846, recording a large number of medieval monuments; various journals were founded which published on medieval sites such as the *Dublin Penny Journal* (1832–6) and the *Irish Penny Journal* (1840–1). For discussion, see Blau, *Ruskinian Gothic*, 10.

106 Pugin, *An Apology*, 23, note 13.

107 Pugin, *An Apology*, 23, note 13.

hailed as 'the most important Romanesque-style building of Pugin's career with specific Irish references'.[108] The church was built according to a cruciform plan on a much larger scale than original Irish Romanesque buildings, which tended to be small stone structures. In terms of its scale and its crenelated crossing tower, Pugin is said to have been inspired by later Cistercian buildings, namely the ruins of Dunbrody Abbey, built in the thirteenth century with its tower added in the fifteenth.[109] However, his use of the round-arch and unusual elements, such as the round tower with conical roof at the north-west corner of the north transept, formed an eclectic homage to Irish Romanesque architecture. Inside, the building was more reminiscent of English Romanesque with its aisled design of seven bays created by means of a round-arched arcade supported by thick columns with simple capitals, with the wall above punctuated by clerestory windows, along with its apsidal chapel, as opposed to the rectangular-plan termini of Irish Romanesque churches.

In keeping with an increased interest in the virtues of Romanesque after 1846, Irish Romanesque monuments such as the famous Killeshin doorway from Co. Laois, c. 1150, were also discussed and illustrated in *The Builder* in 1854.[110] In the same year, Irish design was also prominently included in the Byzantine and Romanesque Court at the Crystal Palace, described in Wyatt and Waring's accompanying eponymous volume, wherein they characterised Irish architectural decoration as having a great deal in common with the Byzantine tradition, even positing that the portal of the eleventh- or twelfth-century Church at Freshford, included in the court, may have once had mosaics in the panels of its jambs.[111] An earlier article in May of 1853 in *The Builder* had also noted the strikingly 'Greek' aspect of the Romanesque sculptures on the portals and windows of Irish churches, and the Killeshin article in 1854 posited the same idea: that the portals of many Irish churches were not Norman but rather were inspired directly by the East and infused with distinctly Irish traits.[112] For Wyatt and Waring, Irish Romanesque differentiated itself from the English variety by means of the lively boldness of its, oftentimes

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108 O'Donnell, 'The Pugins in Ireland', 144. See https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/buildings-search/building/15601096/catholic-church-of-saint-michael-the-archangel-saint-michaels-road-gorey-corporation-lands-gorey-wexford.

109 This was asserted during the sermon at the blessing and dedication of the church. See Forde, *St Michael's Church*, 70.

110 'Ancient doorway, Killeshin Church, Queen's County', *The Builder* 12, 7 January 1854, 2–3.

111 Wyatt and Waring, *The Byzantine and Romanesque*, 97–100.

112 'Introduction', *The Builder* 11, 21 May 1853, 323; 'Ancient doorway', *The Builder* 12, 7 January 1854, 2.

zoomorphic, low relief design. Although Ruskin no doubt played a part in inspiring the naturalistic carvings of University Church, the playfulness of the low relief zoomorphic carvings in the Dublin church – namely the mother birds caring for their young on the alabaster reliefs of the nave wall (Figure 5.3) – chimed with the legacy of the Irish Romanesque tradition.

In 1954, architectural historian Henry Russell Hitchcock proposed that Romanesque revival in England was the style of choice for Low Church Anglicans, Evangelicals and Nonconformists who wished to distance their churches from the Anglo-Catholic use of the Gothic revival style. Kathleen Curran has subsequently demonstrated that this is difficult to establish in relation to Anglicans of a lower ecclesiology, but that those outside of the Church of England, particularly Congregationalists and Baptists, did seem to select the style due to its modesty and practicality, which became symbolic in its own right, speaking to the simplicity and professed renunciation of wealth within early Christianity.[113] Such churches were an embodiment of Newman's looking glass, by means of which Protestant confessions in particular saw in themselves a reflection of the 'purity' of the early Church. It seems that the principle of analogy was common to various types of revival architecture, particularly for those who wished to differentiate themselves or to express something new for the present.

The style used at University Church aligns in general terms to the increased use of early medieval round-arched styles, and the practical impetus behind the choice was comparable to the motivations behind many Romanesque revival buildings. However, financial and practical concerns formed only part of the reason for the selection of the Romano-Byzantine style at University Church – the remaining part of Newman and Pollen's motivation must be sought in relation to the context in which they were building. Instead of harkening back through architectural form to the modesty and simplicity of the early Church as a period of religious purity to emulate, Newman and Pollen's vision was to convey a sense of authoritative continuity through time to the present. The site, finances and historical context of the developing university in Dublin thus led Newman and Pollen to create a Romano-Byzantine basilica for University Church, making it a major contributor to the less studied Byzantine revival which developed in the British Isles from the 1850s.

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113 Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 214–19.

Byzantine revival architecture in Britain

Following its tentative beginnings mixed with other styles in Munich, Byzantine revivalism spread. In Britain it was not nearly as widespread as the Gothic revival, or even the Romanesque revival, for reasons discussed at length in Chapter 2. It only gained traction and wider public appeal there from the 1880s onwards when members of the Arts and Crafts movement looked to the East for inspiration in their repudiation of burgeoning industrialisation, with William Morris, a disciple of Ruskin and leading figure within this movement, elevating the Byzantine as an alternative to Gothic design.[114] The turning point which began the gradual development of Byzantine revival architecture in Britain had come earlier, however, in the mid-1850s with Ruskin's *The Stones of Venice* and the 1854 Crystal Palace Exhibition in Sydenham – when the British were exposed to Byzantine forms for themselves by means of the Byzantine and Romanesque court designed by Wyatt, secretary to the executive committee of the Great Exhibition.[115] Wyatt intended to demonstrate the evolution of artistic styles by means of the Fine Art Courts at the exhibition, and he intended this court in particular to elevate Byzantine design because of its own 'inherent merit' and to demonstrate that the Byzantine, which he perceived as an evolution of Greco-Roman forms, was 'a link between the classic and Gothic styles'.[116] The court comprised an amalgamation of Byzantine and European forms from Cologne, Ravenna, Venice, Rome and Sicily, possibly contributing to the confusion concerning the nature of Byzantine architecture that persisted in the nineteenth century.

Ruskin's writings had disseminated a more positive understanding of Byzantine forms to a wider audience, as discussed in Chapter 2, resulting in secular and ecclesiastical buildings being built

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114 Very few publications exist on Byzantine revivalism in Britain. See Talbot Rice, *The Appreciation of Byzantine Art*; Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*; Kourelis, 'Byzantium and the Avant-Garde', esp. 391–3. The main publication on perceptions of Byzantium in Britain remains Cormack and Jeffreys, *Through the Looking Glass*. On later Byzantinism and the Arts and Crafts movement, see the publications of Kotoula and Kakissis cited in the bibliography. For a comparative study of the thought of Ruskin and Morris, see Goldman, *From Art to Politics*. On Morris's reception of Byzantium and its art, see McAlindon, 'The idea of Byzantium'; Talbot Rice, *The Appreciation of Byzantine Art*, 29–35.

115 See Stereoscopic photograph of the Byzantine Court, Crystal Palace, No. 1. Photograph, ca. 1850s, T. R. Williams (photographer), Victoria and Albert Museum, London. https://collec tions.vam.ac.uk/item/O1044727. Owen Jones's illustrations of Byzantine ornament also gave prominence to the tradition in his seminal *The Grammar of Ornament*, 1856.

116 Wyatt and Waring, *The Fine Arts' Courts in the Crystal Palace*, 7–8.

in a Venetian-Byzantine style in the 1850s and 60s.[117] George Gilbert Scott, mostly known for the buildings he designed in the Gothic revival style, introduced polychromy to a now-destroyed apse that he built at Camden Chapel, Camberwell, in 1854, which was inspired by Ruskin and variously described as having been Romano-Byzantine, Byzantine or Romanesque in style.[118] An article in *The Builder* of July 1854 described the appending of a 'Byzantine chancel' to the 'nondescript' preexisting church as akin to the Roman poet Horace's satirical description in his *Ars Poetica* of the painter who chooses to make 'what in the upper part is a beautiful woman tail off into a hideous fish'.[119] The Byzantine style found earlier and broader success in secular rather than ecclesiastical design, however, where Gothic had become a matter of doctrine for many, even as less antiquarian and more developmental forms of the style took over from the end of the 1840s.

Non-ecclesiastical structures of the 1850s and 60s increasingly employed the Venetian-Byzantine mode, such as the series of largely industrial buildings erected in Bristol in the so-called Bristol Byzantine revivalist style, in which the Byzantine style was merged with elements of medieval architectural design from the Islamic world, particularly from the Iberian Peninsula. A telling expression of the use of the Byzantine style at this time and a high point in terms of its industrial employment was at Abbey Mills pumping station – the 'Cathedral of Sewage' – a waste plant in East London built to a Greek cross plan and reminiscent of an Orthodox church in its aesthetic, by Edmund Cooper and Charles Driver, 1865–8 (Figure 4.4). This building also incorporated Islamic influences in its two chimneys which were subsequently pulled down in 1941 on account of disuse. A similar stylistic amalgamation was also found in the 1850s in Ireland in the Museum Building. Deane and Woodward also used colour, and a mixture of Venetian Gothic with Byzantine and Islamic features, in their now-demolished Crown Life Assurance Office in New Bridge Street, Blackfriar's, 1856–8.[120]

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117 The full extent of Ruskin's influence on secular buildings in the 1850s is now difficult to estimate given the high levels of demolition. See Collins, *Changing Ideals*, 115. On Ruskin's influence on Victorian art and architecture, see, selectively, Brooks, *John Ruskin and Victorian Architecture*; Hewison, *Ruskin's Artists*, esp. ch. 3; Daniels and Brandwood, *Ruskin and Architecture*.

118 The apse was unfortunately destroyed in the second world war and is known now only through an illustration in 'Chancel of Camden Church, Camberwell', *The Builder,* 8 July 1854, 363. Ruskin enthusiastically praised the small work, built under his influence, as exceedingly beautiful in his *Praeterita*. See Ruskin, *Works* 35, 353. See also Brooks, *John Ruskin*, 56–60; Hall, 'G.F. Bodley', 251–3; Hewison, *Ruskin on Venice*, 212; Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 116.

119 'Chancel of Camden Church, Camberwell', *The Builder* 12, 8 July 1854, 362.

120 See the drawing by Charles Cattermole in *Building News* 4, 16 July 1858, 723.

Figure 4.4   Edmund Cooper and Charles Driver, Abbey Mills Pumping Station, East London, 1865–8. © Simon from London. Wikidata, CC BY 2.0. Available at https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q4664040#/media/File:Abbey_Mills_Pumping_Station_(51551458944).jpg

Here again, a diverse array of materials was employed in a celebration of pattern and texture. Pollen designed the sculptures for this building, which were also executed by the O'Shea brothers.[121]

Such uses of the Byzantine in relatively inconspicuous secular projects were permissible, but its employment proved more problematic in churches until slightly later, discussed fully in the final chapter, and in secular projects that were higher in profile.[122] The interest in using the Byzantine style for buildings in Britain was increasing, stimulated not only by Ruskin but also by other bodies of scholarship, particularly the long-running debate in France concerning the Romanesque buildings, such as St Front in Périgueux, that were thought to have been influenced by the domed architecture of Venice and Constantinople.[123] George Gilbert Scott attended Donaldson's

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121 Pollen also worked with Woodward on the Oxford Museum Building and the decoration of Kilkenny Castle, among other projects. Blau, *Ruskinian Gothic*, 100–8; Brooks, *John Ruskin*, 135–7.

122 Limited uses of the Byzantine in ecclesiastical design were found mixed with other styles, as detailed above, such as George Gilbert Scott's apse that he built in a Romanesque/Byzantine style at Camden Chapel in Camberwell (1854).

123 The view in Verneilh's book on Saint Front (Verneilh, *L'architecture byzantine*) – namely that the churches of Périgord were informed by Byzantine architecture by means of San Marco – was widely accepted in France (except by Vitet) and British authors frequently

lecture at the RIBA in 1853 on the topic, entitled 'On a certain class of Gallo-Byzantine churches in or near Périgueux in France', and during the comments afterwards Scott likened English Romanesque churches such as Kilpeck to these French buildings, saying they both evidenced a Greek character.[124] Scott's interest in the Byzantine style continued to develop, and so too did his belief in its suitability for the English context. He designed the Camden Chapel apse in 1854 and later produced what he called an Italianate and 'semi-Byzantine' design for the Foreign Office in Whitehall, London, in 1860, rejected by Prime Minster, Lord Palmerston as 'neither one thing nor t'other – a regular mongrel affair'.[125]

Like Wyatt and others, Scott believed that the Byzantine tradition provided continuity in European design, saying in 1862 that, 'Byzantine is the connecting link between Classic and Gothic, its interiors, excepting Gothic, are the most beautiful in existence, and offer without any exception, the finest field for decorative painting'.[126] Speaking of his travel to Venice, where he met with Ruskin, he later said: 'My impressions of St. Mark's were stronger than I can describe. I considered it, and still continue to do so, the most impressive interior I have ever seen'.[127] His final rejected attempt to design a significant public building in the Byzantine manner in Britain was created for the competition for the Royal Albert Hall, announced in 1862. Inspired by his travel in Perigord in France in the same year and what he termed the 'half Byzantine churches' he had seen there, he submitted a plan based on Hagia Sophia, which was rejected. It was rejected largely for financial reasons, but Scott later remarked that he felt his design had not been given the consideration that it deserved.[128]

Acceptance grew even more slowly for the use of the Byzantine style in ecclesiastical architecture, and it was only from around 1860 onwards that more confident expressions of the Byzantine tradition in

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made reference to it, for example in numerous articles in *The Builder* and in publications by Petit, among others.

124 His response was recorded, along with the lecture, in 'On a certain class of Gallo-Byzantine churches in or near Périgueux in France', *The Builder* 11, 29 January 1853, 67. For a fuller discussion, see Stamp, 'In search of the Byzantine'.

125 Scott, *Personal and Professional*, 197, discussed in Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 136. See George Gilbert Scott, Rejected Byzantine design for the Foreign Office, Whitehall, London, 1860, Pen and Ink, RIBA Collection in Bullen, 'Alfred Waterhouse's Romanesque', 263.

126 Scott, 'Byzantine and Gothic', 250.

127 Scott, *Personal and Professional*, 159.

128 Scott, *Personal and Professional*, 279. See also Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 136–7.

ecclesiastical architecture emerged.[129] Although early attempts to erect churches in any form of round-arched style had met with heavy criticism from many supporters of the Cambridge Camden Society, as described above, there were others who appreciated the deep Christian piety of the Byzantine style. John Mason Neale, co-founder of the society with Benjamin Webb (1819–1885), himself wrote favourably of the style in 1850 in his *Ecclesiology of the Holy Eastern Church*. Neale argued against its characterisation as a corrupted version of Greek pagan architecture and attributed it to 'the breath of Christian life' and 'piety of the deepest fervour', but he did not chart a continuity of style from antiquity to the present like others did, and he did not perceive of it as being as elevated as the Gothic.[130]

Nikolaos Karydis has also recently drawn attention to an increasing interest in the potential use of Byzantine forms in English ecclesiastical architecture at an earlier date. He discusses Donaldson's 1853 lecture in this regard, along with a number of other lectures addressing Byzantine architecture which were delivered at the Royal Academy and Royal Institute of British Architects in the 1840s and 50s, including talks by Pollen's uncle Charles Robert Cockerell (1843), Edwin Nash (1847) and John Louis Petit (1858).[131] Although still limited in their understanding of Byzantine architecture, they were interested in exploring its relevance for ecclesiastical design in England, and one has to wonder about the influence that Cockerell may have had on Pollen in this regard, despite his uncle's disregard for the early Christian basilicas that were favoured by Newman.

Interest in the potential value of Byzantine design for English churches can also be observed in the extended archaeological treatment and more informed discussion of the Byzantine architectural tradition in James Fergusson's *The Illustrated Handbook of Architecture* (1855), which included detailed ground plans and drawings from the buildings of Constantinople. Limiting the appellation 'Byzantine' to the buildings of Turkey and Greece primarily, Fergusson said of Hagia Sophia:

> If we regard it with a view to the purposes of Protestant worship, it affords an infinitely better model for imitation than anything our own medieval architects ever produced.[132]

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129 These are discussed fully in the final chapter of this book.
130 Neale, *A History of the Holy Eastern Church* I, 166. On Neale as the first of the great allies of the Orthodox Church in England, see Chandler, *The Life and Work*, 147–70.
131 Karydis, 'Discovering the Byzantine art of building'.
132 Fergusson, *The Illustrated Handbook* II, 951.

Moreover, he went so far as to say:

> … there is no building erected during the first thirteen centuries
> after the Christian era which, as an interior, is either so beautiful
> or so worthy of attentive study as this, and it is consequently much
> to be regretted that it has been so difficult to obtain access to it.[133]

The 'considerable elegance' that Fergusson attributed to Byzantine architecture was perceived as deteriorating after the time of Justinian and he perpetuates the Gibbonian sense of atrophy and decline in seeing the Byzantine Empire after this point as 'too deficient in unity or science to attempt anything great or good'.[134] Such interest in the use of the Byzantine style for Christian buildings slowly increased until its tentative expression in churches from the 1860s, discussed fully in the final chapter. Generally speaking, however, the Byzantine was always considered a lesser style to the Gothic in Britain, and openness to its use in church architecture was slower than on the Continent because of such strong fidelity to the Gothic as the national Christian style.

Medieval revivals and present identities

Common to the branches of revivalist architecture discussed – Gothic, Romanesque and Byzantine – was the desire to creatively respond to the aesthetic values of the past in order to shape the present.[135] Newman was fully conscious that he was establishing the Catholic university against the backdrop of the 'Enlightenment', with its polemic valorisation of scientific rationalism, often set up in dogmatic opposition to religion and accompanied by a special disdain for the Middle Ages. Romantic neo-medievalisms evolved in the nineteenth century in response to such convictions, particularly in nascent nations seeking to trace a continuous historical lineage, to which the Middle Ages were necessary. Medieval revival styles were thus implicated in the formation of identities for modern nation states, as they sought to trace their identities back through the Middle Ages to the classical European past, and indeed Newman acknowledged that Gothic had the potential to become a

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133 Fergusson, *The Illustrated Handbook* II, 951.
134 Fergusson, *The Illustrated Handbook* II, 962.
135 On the relationship between medieval revivalism and modernism, see Lepine, Lodder and McKever, *Revival*, esp. 17–26; Betancourt and Taroutina, *Byzantium/Modernism*; Lepine, *Medieval Metropolis*.

statement of English nationalism for many, despite the strength of its Christian symbolism.[136]

Even as the Victorian Gothic revival moved past its initial adherence to English Gothic, or what Michael Hall refers to as its 'anglophile antiquarianism', and admitted continental forms from the late 1840s into the 1850s, with figures like Webb and Beresford Hope advocating for greater variety and innovation in the selection of forms, Beresford Hope still considered English Gothic as the 'foundational style'.[137] Even Ruskin, despite his esteem for the buildings of Italy, perceived English Gothic to be most appropriate as a 'national style of architecture'.[138] On the other side of the Irish sea, the activities of Daniel O'Connell (1775–1847) had forged a connection between moderate Irish nationalism and Catholicism, to which the burgeoning of Catholic churches in the Gothic style of Pugin was related. Newman's church no less used the past to inform the present, but he was interested in a Catholic, as opposed to any national, identity.[139] For Newman, 'reason rightly exercised, leads the mind to the Catholic faith', rather than reason treated as a religion in and of itself with no higher authority to answer to, and his desire was to nurture and release into society Catholic men with a holistically integrated intellect.[140] Faced with the connections of the Gothic to both English and Irish nationalist sentiments, and its connection to the secular Godless colleges, Newman chose not to use it as a symbolic expression of his university.

His use of the Romano-Byzantine was primarily intended to express an esteemed and time-honoured Catholic identity for disenfranchised British and Irish Catholics alike. Indeed, his vision from the outset extended even to Catholics from beyond the British Isles, to those in the 'wide world in which the English tongue is spoken'.[141] He, however, primarily saw his venture as restoring Catholics in both England and Ireland to the societal positions that they deserved, stating in his lectures delivered in advance of the university opening that:

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136 On the connection between architecture, identity and nationhood in mid- to late-nineteenth-century British architecture, particularly in relation to colonialism, see Bremner, *Imperial Gothic*, 185–226.

137 Hall, '"Our own"'; Bremner, *Imperial Gothic*, 186; Beresford Hope, *The English Cathedral*, 32–3.

138 Ruskin, *Works* 9, 199–214; Bremner, *Imperial Gothic*, 200.

139 In many ways, this use of the Byzantine style in issues of religious identity was shared across Europe. Sainte-Marie-Majeure in Marseilles, for example, was connected to Catholic revival in France. See Bullen, *Byzantium*, 67.

140 Newman, *Idea*, 181.

141 Newman, *My Campaign* I, 24.

Catholics in these islands have not been in a condition for centuries to attempt the sort of education which is necessary for the man of the world, the statesman, the landholder, or the opulent gentleman. Their legitimate stations, duties, employments, have been taken from them, and the qualifications withal, social and intellectual, which are necessary both for reversing the forfeiture and for availing themselves of the reversal.[142]

His concern was for the plight of Catholics in the British Isles as a whole.[143] Newman was aware of the context within which he was building and chose this Romano-Byzantine style to communicate his vision. The structure, decoration and ritual of University Church were integral to its purpose of embodying the essence of the university, and the carefully considered unity of the structural and stylistic choices made there at this date should be seen as striking in comparison to eclectic attempts at basilican architectures before this. Newman's architectural achievements were not of secondary importance, as they have been previously characterised, and indeed Pollen's role was of equal importance to that of Newman's in this regard.[144]

Continuities of approach may be discerned between Newman's churches at Littlemore and Dublin, particularly in that both were designed to be practical but affective spaces with limited budgets, which would lead the mind of the individual believer to higher contemplation and thus inculcate faith. Following his conversion to Catholicism, Newman no longer had to wrestle with his draw towards the aesthetic and the sacramental which he had so struggled with in Rome prior to conversion. The value of the visual and the material church was no longer controversial and existed quite naturally as a tool at his disposal within the Roman Catholic faith. In Dublin we see the full expression of Newman's symbolic use of art and architecture through his collaboration with Pollen.[145]

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142 Newman, *Idea*, xv–xvi.

143 Garland argues that the 'complicated contradictions' regarding the social class that the university would serve, including whether it would be for the Irish or for English-speaking Catholics more broadly, which caused considerable difficulties to the venture, resulted from the incompatibility of the project with Newman's own social class and background. Garland, 'Newman in his own day', 270.

144 Patrick, 'Newman, Pugin' characterises Newman's architectural interests as secondary to his theological endeavours. Whyte, *Unlocking the Church*, 37, argues against this that Newman's 'architectural interests' were not 'somehow ephemeral or essentially less serious than his theological preoccupations'.

145 On the plans for his permanent Oratory church in Birmingham, rather than the basic temporary structure which was erected and subsequently pulled down after his death, see Tristam,

In contrast to Pugin, whose Catholicism could only be expressed by means of the Gothic style, Newman adopted a pragmatic, contextual approach to architecture. A Romano-Byzantine style was chosen because of the limitations of site and budget, and also because it allowed an imposing and beautiful building to be achieved through which to express the legitimacy of the institution as authorised by Rome, avoiding associations with English or indeed Irish nationalism(s), and without exacerbating suspicions of direct papal interference (as discussed earlier). It celebrated its Irish context through its materials and the content of its paintings and sculptures. Most importantly, it expressed developmental continuity from the apostolic church, and likened by means of stylistic analogy the members of the university and the early Christians who overcame their analogous heathen context. The aim of the Catholic university was the holistic intellectual formation of its students, not the acquisition of knowledge for its own sake.[146] The appeal for authority in this venture could only be to the Roman church and he is clear in his lectures delivered before the university opened, now compiled in *The Idea of a University*, that the mandate for the university came from 'the highest authority on earth … from the Chair of St. Peter'.[147] University Church was a visual statement of the authority vested in him by Rome, an authority stretching back to St Peter by means of apostolic succession. According to Newman, 'All who take part with the Apostle, are on the winning side', an idea expressed in the very fabric of his church.[148]

Cardinal Newman; Nicholls, *Unearthly Beauty*, 261–6. Newman was never able to realise his plans for his Oratory church, mostly on account of the expenses of the Achilli trial in 1852, but he explored plans for a 'Roman style' basilican church with a 'smack of Moorish and Gothic' which had 'all the beauty of Greece with something of the wildness of other styles'. He was again interested in an adaptation of the simple basilican style. *Letters and Diaries* 14, 290. The French architect Joseph-Louis Duc designed plans for Newman, who wished for 'foreign' input, which entailed a domed cruciform building with an aisled nave and shallow transept arms – another contemporary response to the Roman basilica.

146 Newman, *Idea*, xi–xii.

147 Newman, *Idea*, 10. He acknowledges that he was not in and of himself qualified to understand the issues in Ireland, not to mention in a position to solve them, that he was from a different place and that the Irish were better qualified to comment upon 'the difficulties that beset us, and they are doubtless greater than I can even fancy or forbode', but that the decision of the Holy See carries the final authority in the matter of whom should be appointed rector. *Idea*, 12.

148 Newman, *Idea*, 13.

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The apse 'mosaic' and Newman's idea of a university

> I wish the same spots and the same individuals to be at once oracles of philosophy and shrines of devotion … It will not satisfy me, if religion is here, and science there … devotion is not a finish given to the sciences … I want the intellectual layman to be religious, and the devout ecclesiastic to be intellectual.[1]

Nowhere is the connection between the aesthetic of the church and the mission of the university more evident than in the pseudo-mosaic in the semi-dome of the apse, which Pollen painted: it formed the centre piece of the church, both visually and conceptually (Figure 5.1). The sumptuous marble inlay is continued on the curved lower wall of the apse surmounted by a blind arcade filled with Connemara green. Above this, an unusual latticework design in white glazed ceramic tiles on a red ground is punctuated by circles filled with a symmetrical floriate design. In the centre, the domed wooden baldacchino accented with gold is attached to the wall, supported by brackets. Underneath this is an ornate section of marble inlay punctuated by designs based on the use of polished stone studs and paint. Above this is Pollen's pseudo-mosaic, painted on lined wooden panels.

In the centre of the semi-dome, the enthroned Virgin is labelled *Sedes Sapientiae* – 'the Seat of Wisdom'. The dove of the Holy Spirit is included above her, with outstretched wings and a jewelled cross above. The hand of God extends from the summit of the semi-dome, emitting brilliant rays of light. An inhabited vine grows from the base of the composition, its branches swirling outwards in a series of circles that

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1 *OS* 1, 13.

Figure 5.1   University Church, Dublin. The apse. © Niamh Bhalla

occupy the remaining space of the conch. Each circle contains a saint bearing a palm frond, on a dark ground that contrasts with the gold ground of the remainder of the composition. A variety of flora and fauna occupy the tendrils of the vines. Pollen identified the saints as types of

'immaculate purity', and the vine and field below inhabited with birds, insects and animals as 'the homage of that portion of Creation into which sin has not entered, or which has been redeemed from it'.[2] The design was a clear response to the apse mosaic in the upper church of San Clemente in Rome (completed by 1125) – itself comprising significant early Christian and medieval motifs – connecting the building once again to the ancient and medieval church of Rome (see Figure 5.4).[3] Moreover, the design can be read as an exposition of Newman's philosophy of education.[4]

The emulation of mosaic

In a letter dated 8 August 1855, Pollen referred to his desire to do his 'mosaic work' in the semi-dome, making it clear that he intended to emulate the more expensive medium from the outset.[5] An understanding of the history and meaning of mosaic and its revival in Britain is thus necessary to shed light on Pollen's image. Interest in mosaic was steadily increasing in the early 1850s in Britain, evident from the mosaic exhibits by various European countries at the Great Exhibition of 1851.[6] Thomas Hope and Lord Lindsay had written on Byzantine mosaics as an inherently Christian art form, in keeping with their esteem for the piety of the Byzantine style, but Ruskin's description of San Marco generated greater interest still in mosaics, particularly his assertion of their capacity to instil religious 'awe' through their majestic solemnity.[7]

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2 Pollen, 'Lecture VI', 381. The design also relates to the wider use of vegetation, birds and animals throughout the church as the most appropriate forms of ornamentation because they were what God had created, rather than man. In this, Pollen was indebted to the thought of Ruskin, as well as the general increase in interest in using organic sources of inspiration in the period. See Ruskin, *Works* 9, 265–6.

3 Krautheimer, *Rome*, 161–202; Sundell, *Mosaics*, 89–94, esp. 90; Stroll, *Symbols as Power*, 118–31; James, *Mosaics*, 1–2, 375–8; Toubert, *Un art dirigé*, 193–238; Riccioni, *Il mosaico absidale*.

4 It seems that Pollen was behind the design, though they more than likely discussed and planned it together. In a letter to Pollen on 30 July 1856, Newman says, 'Should you feel a wish not to launch into your (giant) pictures, let us fit up the apse in some other way'. *Letters and Diaries* 17, 338, indicating that they had previously discussed the design.

5 Letter [to John Henry Newman] from John Hungerford Pollen, 62 R[athmines] R[oad] [Dublin], 8 August [1855]. *PA*, MS. 17906/5, fols. 10–11.

6 England, Italy, France, Germany and Russia all exhibited samples. Schultheiss, *Like an Ancient Shrine*, 81–8. See Barr, *Venetian Glass*, 14–15 on the exquisite table topped with mosaic from the International Exhibition. On the exhibitions that took place in the 1850s and 60s that displayed both reproductions of ancient mosaics and modern examples, see Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 109, 127.

7 Ruskin, *Works* 10, 132.

It was only from the 1860s that the art of mosaic was employed more widely, however, primarily through the work of Antonio Salviati.[8] Salviati, a lawyer from Vicenza, launched in 1859 a company that was capable of manufacturing mosaic commercially, and he was astute in selling his products across Europe, largely through the international exhibitions.[9] Following the firm's successful participation in the International Exhibition of 1862 in London, Salviati's company received prestigious commissions for mosaics in high-profile buildings, perhaps most pertinently for the memorial projects for the Prince Consort ordered by Queen Victoria and carried out in the 1860s; namely, those for the Albert Memorial Chapel in Windsor, the portico of the Royal Mausoleum at Frogmore and the National Memorial for the Prince Consort in London.[10]

Mosaic was not widely found in Britain where, historically, it had existed since Roman times but largely for luxury pavements, rather than for walls or ceilings.[11] The Grand Tour generated research into and a taste for mosaics, with the first writings by British writers on mosaic appearing in the first half of the nineteenth century. From the 1860s, mosaic work began within public buildings in Britain because it could weather the damp English climate and its imperishable splendour lent prestige. It also fulfilled the desire for extensive polychromatic decoration that had increased in architectural theory from the mid-nineteenth century.[12] Its employment was not without contention, however, and artists and patrons still faced suspicions of idolatry and Popery over the execution of colourful iconographies in the interior of churches.[13] Even within the Catholic tradition, mosaic was denigrated by influential figures like Nicholas Wiseman (1802–1865), who went on to become the first Archbishop of Westminster in 1850. In an article in the *Dublin Review* in 1847, Wiseman castigated 'the hard and dark delineations of the Byzantine school' in calling for a school of Catholic painting based

8   Liefkes, 'Antonio Salviati'; Barr, *Venetian Glass*, 19–42; *Venetian Glass Mosaics*. The art form had never been completely lost in Italy. Voccoli, 'Die Wiederbelebung des Mosaiks', 16.

9   See, for example, the copies of mosaics from San Marco and Hagia Sophia that he and his Murano glass maker, Lorenzo Radi, exhibited at the Italian Exhibition in Florence in 1861. Wyatt, 'On pictorial mosaic', 219.

10 The design at Frogmore comprised elements inspired by the Arian Baptistry and the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia in Ravenna. Schultheiss, *Like an Ancient Shrine*, 57–148, 233–63.

11 Schultheiss, *Like an Ancient Shrine*, 65–77.

12 Wyatt pointed out its suitability to the English weather. See Wyatt, 'On pictorial mosaic', 2; Schultheiss, *Like an Ancient Shrine*, 123.

13 On the theological, aesthetic and political controversy surrounding its employment, see Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 146–51.

on the works of quattrocento artists.[14] However, the characterisation of mosaic as an inherently Christian medium, associated almost entirely with Byzantium, eventually won out. For writers like Hope and Lindsay, mosaic merely had a Roman prelude to its most glorious Christian phase in Byzantium. Hope asserted that mosaics, even later 'magnificent examples' in Rome such as San Clemente, were entirely Byzantine: they were manufactured in Constantinople 'until the extirpation of the Greek empire, and thence diffused over all the countries within easy reach of Greek artists'.[15] Lindsay agreed that 'Greek artists were employed in every church of consequence', and that while Latin artists learned and executed the *Opus Graecanicum* found on the floors of western medieval churches, the luminous mosaics of the vaults were the preserve of Byzantine artists.[16]

Ruskin cemented the characterisation of mosaic as an inherently Byzantine art form that was suited to all Christian churches in *The Stones of Venice,* wherein he asserted that the Byzantine church was differentiated from other styles by means of its pictorial mosaics covering large expanses of surface.[17] Wyatt and Waring continued this line of thought, asserting the 'truly ecclesiastical' character of Byzantium's 'gold-clad interiors' and arguing that 'beautiful glass mosaic' was 'peculiar' to the Byzantine style.[18] So too did Pollen who defined it as 'early Christian representation' that was perfected in Byzantine basilicas.[19] Even later, when mosaics had begun to appear within British churches, Sir Austen Henry Layard (1817–1894) still described the art form as 'essentially a Christian art' which was fundamentally connected to Byzantium as Rome's 'Eastern successor'.[20] Similar to the treatment of Byzantine architecture discussed in Chapter 2, the positive treatment of Byzantine mosaic relied upon its conceptualisation as 'early Christian', divorced from denominational considerations.

There can be no doubt that the mosaic in San Clemente that Pollen was responding to was perceived as a Byzantine work of art. Lord Lindsay even goes so far as to say that the first stirrings of the revival of

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14 In this he was writing under the influence of French critic Alexis François Rio who characterised Byzantine art in terms of its moral and intellectual corruption. He equally castigates in this article other revivalist styles of art based on the medieval west. Rio, *De la poésie chrétienne*; Wiseman. 'Christian art', 493.

15 Hope, *An Historical Essay* I, 166–70.

16 Lindsay, *Sketches* I, 246.

17 Ruskin, *Works* 10, 132.

18 Wyatt and Waring, *The Byzantine and Romanesque*, 20, 29, 32.

19 Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 142.

20 Layard, 'Mosaic Decoration. Royal Institute of British Architects', 888. Discussed in Schultheiss, *Like an Ancient Shrine*, 105.

art under the Byzantine Komnenian emperors of the eleventh century were felt in the apse mosaic of San Clemente: this 'most elaborate and beautiful performance yielding to none in the minuteness of detail and delicacy of sentiment' embodied 'the resuscitation of the symbolism of early Christianity'.[21] Mosaic was thus identified with the revival of art under Christianity, and Pollen too attributed to these 'rude' Byzantine designs 'a grandeur which no art, with all its charm, has since surpassed': they represented the inauguration of the 'revival of the arts'.[22]

This enduring view of medieval mosaics as inherently and inescapably Byzantine has been challenged only relatively recently, particularly by art historian Liz James. As in Victorian scholarship, contemporary writers have mostly assumed that western medieval mosaics were either carried out by Byzantine craftsmen or local workers trained in the Byzantine idiom, despite the fact that mosaic making probably never ceased in centres like Rome, as once thought. James highlights the difficulty of assigning images to various cultural traditions and the iconographic and stylistic complexity of the medieval mosaics in Italy themselves, which variously incorporated early Christian, Byzantine, Romanesque and Gothic features. James allows for the possibility that regardless of this complexity, there may still have been a perceived connection between mosaic and Byzantium for medieval viewers.[23] Regardless of when it emerged, the connection between mosaic and Byzantium was widespread and enduring in the nineteenth century.[24] Indeed, an article in April 1852 in *The Builder* outlined how Byzantine artists were responsible for both the early mosaic work in Rome prior to 800 and its resurgence there in the twelfth century after Abbot Desiderius, from the great Benedictine Monastery of Montecassino, sent for Greek workmen in around 1150 to revive the artform that had supposedly been lost in Italy. This theory reiterated the thought of Hope in his *Historical Essay* – and this is precisely the thesis that James has challenged.[25]

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21 Lindsay, *Sketches* I, 276–7.
22 Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 141–2.
23 James, *Mosaics*, especially the introduction and 401–5 in relation to the connection made between Byzantium and Roman mosaics like that at San Clemente.
24 Articles in *The Builder* repeatedly reference mosaic as a Byzantine art form. See, for example, 'On the decoration', *The Builder* 9, 22 February 1851, 131.
25 'Mosaic work; enamel', *The Builder* 10, 3 April 1852, 210; Hope, *An Historical Essay* I, 170. There is a large body of scholarship on this mosaic connecting it to the reforms initiated under Pope Gregory VI in the eleventh century and to Montecassino, starting with Toubert, *Un art dirigé*, 193–238 (a republication of an earlier article from 1970) up to Riccioni, *Il mosaico absidale*, a line of thought challenged only occasionally, such as in Romano, 'I pittori romani'.

Petra Schultheiss has demonstrated that the death of Albert, the Prince Consort, provided the catalyst for the use of mosaic in ecclesiastical design in England as his devoted wife Queen Victoria commissioned three memorial projects that used the durable Christian medium to provide an enduring testimony to his life and character: it was a choice of medium that inherently suited his Christian piety and devotion to the arts. Schultheiss argues persuasively that the Prince Consort's death connected the emerging scholarly and artistic interest with the impetus and financial means to employ the expensive and brilliant medium on the ceiling and walls of the Albert Memorial Chapel in Windsor, remodelled between 1862–5 by George Gilbert Scott; on the ceiling and upper walls of the porch at the Mausoleum at Frogmore, where the design was inspired by the mosaics of the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia in Ravenna; and on the National Memorial in London.[26]

The inclusion of Neo-Byzantine mosaics within the prominent classical building of St Paul's Cathedral from 1864, beginning with Salviati's Prophet Isaiah and concluding with the work of William Blake Richmond (1842–1921) from the early 1890s to 1904, marked a significant turning point within the Protestant establishment and a more widespread acceptance of mosaic as an inherently Christian form.[27] Alexander Beresford Hope, Thomas Hope's son, saw the mosaics as a triumph for Byzantine revivalism which could turn the Protestant faith away from suspecting idolatry behind the use of decoration – saying, 'the mosaics make one understand what real and good Christian art is and always has been; rich, genuine, imposing and historic, intelligible to the learned and unlearned'.[28] He thus stressed the continuity of Christian form and sense of gravitas that they embodied along with their imposing monumentality – concepts celebrated by Ruskin, that Newman and Pollen had already expressed visually within the means at their disposal through the emulation of mosaic in Dublin.

Pollen's emulation of mosaic pre-dated the more widespread manufacture of the vitreous medium, but in covering the curved space of the apse with gold and with a solemn representation of the Virgin and saints, he was clearly emulating the luxurious and durable medium and he referred to it himself in such terms. His painted emulation of mosaic followed on from the earlier Neo-Byzantine murals by Nazarene artists that both he and Newman had admired in Munich, particularly those by

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26 Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 142; Schultheiss, *Like an Ancient Shrine*.
27 See Beresford Hope, 'Classical and Byzantine'; Barr, *Venetian Glass*, 20–3; Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 148–9; Baldry, 'The new decorations'.
28 Beresford Hope, 'Classical and Byzantine', 461.

Heinrich von Hess (1798–1863) in the Allerheiligen-Hofkirche, built for Ludwig I between 1826–37 and Georg Friedrich Ziebland's basilica of St Boniface (1835–50). Pollen's work also anticipated similar responses to the medium of mosaic by later members of the Arts and Crafts movement. Of his paintings in the church, Pollen said, 'The golden apse, and the side arched panels with a rude mosaic round them, ought to tell their own story', and indeed they arguably do communicate – through their emulation of mosaic and their iconography – the aims of the university.[29]

The *Sedes Sapientiae* is the part of the composition that deviates most obviously from the design at San Clemente (Figure 5.2), and she is key to understanding the meaning of the church as a whole. Indeed, she gave the church its official title and dedication – The Church of Our Lady Seat of Wisdom. Eileen Kane suggests that the apse is the area of the church that most reflects Pollen's input.[30] Kane attributes this representation of the Virgin to the Flemish work that Pollen had encountered on his travels, such as a wooden, enthroned Virgin in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, which Pollen may have seen when he was in Ghent.[31] While this might have provided a formal model for the type, the composition as a whole manifests as an expression of Newman's vision for the university, and indeed Kane in revisiting her article notes the frequency with which the Sedes Sapientiae is invoked in Newman's writings.[32] The men worked closely together on every aspect of the church and its decoration, and the apse was no different. In a letter to Pollen on 9 November 1856, Newman states, 'The Apse is magnificent … it is most imposing', while also outlining some detailed adjustments that he thought would benefit the design and make it 'splendid'. Notwithstanding these minor recommendations, he writes in a postscript that 'the church is the most beautiful in the three Kingdoms'.[33] Pollen had successfully achieved what Newman desired – the beautiful and imposing building that he required as the public embodiment of his university. The apse portrayed the university as the *alma mater* who would send holistically formed students out into the world through the authority of papal Rome. The 'union of Science and Religion' was at the heart of his vision for the university, and it was visually and materially embodied in the decoration of the apse.[34]

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29 Pollen, 'Lecture VI', 381.
30 Kane, 'Newman's Catholic University Church', 112–13. Pollen would of course have been greatly familiar with the mosaic from his time in Rome, but it was also given increased prominence through its reproduction in Hope, *An Historical Essay* II, 3.
31 Kane, 'John Henry Newman's Catholic University Church', 113.
32 Kane, 'John Henry Newman's Catholic University Church revisited', n. 37.
33 *Letters and Diaries* 17, 440.
34 Newman, *My Campaign* I, 24.

Figure 5.2 University Church, Dublin. Detail of the Sedes Sapientiae. © Niamh Bhalla

The embodiment of Newman's educational ideal

Newman's opinions on education are peppered across his vast corpus of writings.[35] Particularly important in this regard, however, is *The Idea of a University*, now enshrined as a classic text on third-level education and often, unfairly, perceived as the only legacy remaining from Newman's years in Dublin. Sheldon Rottblatt famously described it as, 'unquestionably the single most important treatise in the English language on the nature and meaning of higher education', and yet it was not designed as such: the contents were originally a collection of speeches given in the context of setting his vision for a liberal education in Ireland's first Catholic university.[36] The first set of lectures were delivered in 1852 and published in 1853 (although the title page reads 1852) in advance of the opening of the university, while the second set comprised occasional lectures delivered while he was rector and published in 1859. They were edited and published together for the first time in 1873. In sketching what the essence of a university was in relation to his context, Newman did not discuss largely uncontentious issues and, as such, the book

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35 His personal correspondence alone is now collected in 32 volumes. *Letters and Diaries*. Still definitive in this regard is Culler, *Imperial Intellect.*
36 Rothblatt, 'An Oxonian "idea" of a university', 287. For discussion, see Barr, 'Ireland', 48–69; Ker, *John Henry Newman*, 376.

should not be characterised as a full expression of Newman's philosophy of education, but the lectures do give insight into the issues he perceived as most pressing in setting up his Catholic university in Dublin.[37]

Commentators have often read *The Idea* apart from the circumstances in which it was written, however; a tendency that has been robustly challenged in more recent scholarship.[38] The lectures written before the university opened primarily addressed the need for a Catholic university as opposed to the secular Queen's Colleges, in keeping with Cullen's request that Newman would persuade his audience of the necessity of education being religious. Connected to this, they also focus on the benefits of a liberal, rather than professional, university education, a wider debate current in relation to the English universities of the period. Newman acknowledged in his memorandum on the objectives of the new university for the Irish bishops that, in providing Catholic education, they were still unavoidably reliant 'upon Protestant institutions and Protestant writings'.[39] Ian Ker demonstrates how painfully aware Newman was of the difficulties he faced in the context and the fine line that he needed to tread between appeasing Cullen, assuaging nationalists who feared the institution would not be an Irish one, and mitigating against any wider view of the university as operating under a narrow and dogmatic clerical control.[40]

Newman's educational vision was inescapably responding to the Oxbridge model and the debate concerning utilitarianism that burgeoned at this time. Newman refers extensively in Discourses V and VII of *The Idea of the University* to the reply of Edward Copleston (1776–1849) to critic Rev. Sydney Smith's (1771–1845) review in *The Edinburgh Review* of Richard Lovell Edgeworth's (1744–1817) *Essays on Professional Education* in which Smith ridiculed Oxford's useless

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37 The lectures need to be read in the context of his letters, reports and other writings. Colin Barr also points out that the liberal ideals found in *The Idea* should not be criticised without due consideration for Newman's practical achievements in Dublin, such as investing in research and furthering a socially utilitarian education through the medical and engineering schools there. These things can be accessed by means of the reports produced during his time there, now gathered in *My Campaign*, which was printed after his death. His vision and achievements should also be seen against the backdrop of careers such as law, medicine and engineering having been taught by means of apprenticeships in the early nineteenth century. On his medical school, in particular, see Vélez, 'Newman's compelling reasons'. His lectures also do not address things that he did feel very strongly about in higher education, such as pastoral care in a collegiate system. See Shrimpton, *Making of Men*.

38 See, especially, Barr, 'Historical (mis)understandings of the idea', esp. 128–9. Bottone, *The Philosophical Habit* provides a thorough discussion of Newman's educational ideal in relation to the human person through study of all of his Dublin writings, not just these lectures.

39 *Letters and Diaries* 17, 557.

40 Ker, *John Henry Newman*, 383, 407–8.

curriculum of classical learning which excluded useful subjects like chemistry and modern languages.[41] Copleston responded that Oxford undergraduates were being turned out as future leaders in public policy so that it was inappropriate to teach practical skills to them. Colin Barr has argued that the ideas put forward by Newman in *The Idea* were 'to a great extent an updated, refined, and catholicized restatement of the arguments advanced by Copleston (1810) and later amplified and to a degree clarified by John Davison (1777–1834), the English clergyman and academic'.[42]

The ideas in Newman's writings were an obvious repudiation of well-known convictions regarding utilitarianism in education, despite the contribution to professional education that he went on to make in Dublin, particularly in the provision of courses in medicine and engineering which had been taught by means of apprenticeships in the early nineteenth century.[43] Indeed, the second of the 10 objectives for the university outlined in the memorandum for the Irish bishops, was 'to provide a professional education for students of law and medicine; and a liberal education for the mercantile class'.[44] In *The Idea*, however, Newman outlines a broad holistic approach to pedagogy and the person that did not prioritise specific skills, but rather valuable, thinking members of society.[45] The end goal of a university was not the advancement of knowledge per se, but rather equipping students with an intellect 'properly trained and formed to have a connected view or grasp of things'.[46] A liberal education could, as such, be an end in and of itself, but it necessarily came with 'great secular utility … constituting the best and highest formation of the intellect for social and political life'.[47]

A fully formed, cultivated intellect, or 'philosophical habit of mind', which could holistically synthesise and integrate all spheres of knowledge could only be acquired by means of a complete curriculum that embraced all of the sciences.[48] In response to the 'godless' colleges of Robert Peel,

41 Copleston, *A Reply to the Calumnies of the Edinburgh Review*; Lovell Edgeworth, *Essays on Professional Education*; Smith, 'Essays on professional education'.
42 Barr, 'Ireland', 50. For discussion, see Garland, 'Newman in his own day', esp. 271.
43 Stemming from John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, first published 1689, and later John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, 1859.
44 *Letters and Diaries* 17, 557.
45 He asserts that he is writing on the basis of reason rather than revelation in his opening of the lectures written before the inauguration of the university, although for Newman reason rightly exercised will always lead to the Catholic faith.
46 Newman, *Idea*, xvii.
47 Newman*, Idea*, 214.
48 Newman, *Idea*, 51. On the direct end of the university as intellectual and the indirect end as religious in relation to this guiding concept in Newman's lectures, see Meszaros, 'A philosophical habit of mind'.

which proposed not to teach religion at all in a co-educational context, amid rising secularism and the difficulties of providing education for Catholics, Newman emphasised the place of theology in the curriculum, though, ironically, he never managed to realise this faculty.[49] He opens his lectures by stating emphatically, 'A University is a place of *teaching* universal *knowledge*'.[50] The central argument of his lectures was that the university had a responsibility to teach a complete curriculum, and that necessarily included theology.[51] All 'branches' of learning and spheres of knowledge were mutually dependent and equally essential in understanding the larger integrated whole of the universe:

> … all knowledge forms one whole, because its subject-matter is one; for the universe in its length and breadth is so intimately knit together, that we cannot separate off portion from portion, and operation from operation, except by a mental abstraction.[52]

After the church opened officially on 1 May 1856, a sermon was preached every Sunday of term time.[53] Newman's first sermon fortuitously took place on the feast of St Monica, mother of St Augustine (354–430), the most erudite theologian of the early church. It was Monica's relentless prayers that were realised in the conversion of her son. Prior to conversion, Augustine had pursued the growth of his intellect for his own ambitions, but he then put it to the service of the Church. Monica became a model for the Church and Augustine for intelligence harnessed for greater ends. Newman took full advantage of the opportunity presenting itself and made the analogy between the mother and the university as the alma mater who took her place in the lives of the young people entrusted to her care, who would turn out her charges as both 'oracles of philosophy and shrines of devotion' through uniting science with religion. In this way, the sermon addressed a key element of

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49 Newman intended his university to have five faculties – the four medieval faculties, plus science, elevated from being a subdivision of the school of arts according to the precedent of the Catholic University of Louvain. He attempted to realise all but theology, ironically, given that he left this for the bishops to establish, but only medicine and the arts were successful. Culler, *Imperial Intellect*, 159. The second discourse in *Idea* is devoted to theology as a branch of knowledge. For discussion, see Morgan, '"Navigation for an ocean"'; Marsden, 'Theology and the university'; Christie, 'Newman's aesthetic vision'.

50 Newman, *Idea*, ix. Emphases are Newman's. For further discussion of *The Idea of a University*, see Barr, 'Historical (mis)understandings'; MacIntyre, 'The very idea'; Dunne, 'Newman now'.

51 Newman, *Idea*, ix.

52 Newman, *Idea*, 50.

53 Those preached by Newman have been collected in *OS*.

Newman's thinking on education that was indicated but not addressed in great detail in *The Idea* – the pastoral and spiritual responsibility of the university.[54]

Newman described the university as both the alma mater and also as 'a *seat* of learning' across his Dublin lectures, and at the head of the main article in each issue of the *Catholic University Gazette*, Newman included the words 'Sedes Sapientiae, ora pro nobis'.[55] The Seat of Wisdom as the ultimate heavenly mother here provided a visual role model for the university in its primary task of developing both knowledge and morality in its charges (Figure 5.2).[56] The Virgin as the Sedes Sapientiae in the apse provided the type for the role of the university in inculcating wisdom – the holistic acquisition of intellectual knowledge that would be utilised with diligence.[57] In his last sermon delivered at St Mary's University Church in Oxford before his conversion, Newman referred to the Virgin as 'our pattern of Faith, both in the reception and in the study of Divine Truth, She does not think it enough to accept, she dwells upon it … not enough to assent, she develops it'.[58] The Virgin was not only the pattern for each individual Christian but also for the mission of the university, alongside being its intercessor and protector.

Including the Sedes Sapientiae at the heart of the decorative programme was also an overt acknowledgement of the university's forerunner in this task, the Catholic University of Louvain, which had the wooden carving of the Sedes Sapientiae by Nicolaas De Bruyne, 1442, located in St Peter's Church, Louvain, as its symbol. The Dublin university as alma mater would, like the university in Louvain, nourish Catholic youths and send them out into the world. The idea radiated from the apse and is found in small but significant details throughout the church, particularly in the relief alabaster capitals that complete the green pseudo-columns of the nave walls on which a series of mother birds incubate and feed their chicks, creating a further analogy between the university and the mother (Figure 5.3).

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54 This less-explored aspect of Newman's vision and work is explored in detail in Shrimpton, *Making of Men*.
55 Newman, *Idea*, 21.
56 On the university as the 'alma mater' who knows her children individually, see Newman, *Idea*, 144–5.
57 Newman speaks also about the need to teach such wisdom that has 'stood the trial and received the sanction of ages'. *Idea*, xxii.
58 Newman, *Sermons, Chiefly on the Theory* 15, 3.

Figure 5.3   University Church, Dublin. Detail of an alabaster relief capital in the nave showing a mother bird feeding her chicks in a nest. © Niamh Bhalla

The Seat of Wisdom is surrounded by flora and fauna that spread out across the semi-dome as a reference to the totality of the natural world 'in its length and breadth … so intimately knit together', which provided the subject matter of many of the 'sciences' taught at the university – those 'larger or smaller portions of the field of knowledge' that contribute to the larger whole of universal knowledge.[59] In outlining his conception of university education, Newman argues at length against current approaches stemming from natural theology that could be used to justify the omission of theology from the curriculum on the basis that understanding the phenomena of the natural world in their respective disciplines provided sufficient knowledge concerning the Supreme Being.[60] Newman recognised that 'a supplemental process to complete and harmonize their evidence' was required to understand the attributes of the Divine Being who is 'more than nature', and this he sees is the role of theology as a science on par with the other sciences: 'Religious doctrine is knowledge … university teaching without theology is simply unphilosophical' because without it a branch was missing.[61]

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59   Newman, *Idea*, 46.

60   On Newman's objection in the second and third discourses to the 'natural theology' of figures like William Paley, Lord Brougham, Sir Robert Peel, and Bishop Edward Maltby, who argued that the study of the natural sciences would necessarily lead to religion, see Fletcher, 'Newman and natural theology'.

61   Newman, *Idea*, 41–2.

For Newman, the universe was a complex whole and theology played its own role in integrating knowledge of its various facets into a meaningful system.[62] Theology was necessary so that other disciplines did not have to address larger questions that they were not suitably qualified to answer: if any subject was omitted from the 'circle of knowledge', other sciences would take its place; they would 'exceed their proper bounds, and intrude where they have no right'.[63] Theology and the other sciences occupied their own respective spheres, which were 'contiguous' and 'cognate to each other, but not identical', and all were necessary to the formation of the intellect.[64] They were symbiotically connected and theology could not be omitted without impairing 'the completeness' and invalidating the 'trustworthiness of all that is actually taught' at the university.[65] More than this, theology was the ground upon which the other academic disciplines could operate, 'a condition of general knowledge'.[66] Although all the sciences were 'connected together' and necessarily had bearing on one another, theology 'must exercise over a great variety of sciences, completing and correcting them'.[67] The Seat of Wisdom surrounded by creation reflected Newman's conception of the university as 'a seat of universal learning' in developing in its charges a truly philosophical mind through its complete curriculum which provided the necessary training for students to understand the world around them, the full breadth of God's creation.[68]

The image was primarily intended to spur the minds and hearts of its viewers to devotion. The design of the apse as the focus of the liturgy was evidently of great importance to Newman. In planning for his Birmingham Oratory, Newman stressed that beautiful colouring was particularly important there or else the apse itself would 'be a failure'.[69] The bountiful and colourful, but stylised, representation of the natural world in Dublin also resonates with a theme found in Newman's writings pertaining somewhat to natural religion despite his wariness concerning it, namely the beauty of Eden that was lost through sin, a beauty now glimpsed and yearned for through the natural world, 'that portion of Creation into which sin has not entered' according to

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62   Newman, *Idea*, Discourse III. Discussed in Sullivan, 'Newman's circle of knowledge', 99–100.
63   Newman, *Idea*, 73.
64   This is the idea extrapolated on in Discourse III in Newman, *Idea*.
65   Newman, *Idea*, 69.
66   Newman, *Idea*, 70.
67   Newman, *Idea*, 96.
68   Newman, *Idea*, 101.
69   Letter to Richard Stanton. 6 June 1851. *Letters and Diaries* 14, 294.

Pollen's schema.[70] The natural world was not glorified for its own sake through the stylised pseudo-mosaic, however, nor was it framed as revealing direct knowledge of God, rather it pointed to realities beyond itself: its beauty was intended to create a desire for God in the context of the liturgy. This was the role that Newman posited for the beauty of religious painting itself, provided it was kept in check as a means to this end, as 'subservient' to religion, rather than being conceived and admired for its own sake.[71] Here the painting expressed, through both its subject matter and its style, Newman's view of the role of beauty, both natural and manmade, as pointing beyond itself to what Guy Nicholls has termed 'unearthly beauty'.

In *The Idea*, Newman discusses medieval styles of art, architecture and music as preferable, so that they maintain their appropriate position as 'high ministers of the Beautiful and noble … special attendants and handmaids of Religion'. Newman's preference was for 'rudimental' styles of architecture and painting styles that had not grown into a fully 'imitative art' which emulated and pursued 'the beauty of Nature, even till it becomes an ideal beauty' rather than serving the Church.[72] He favoured painting styles that pointed beyond themselves to heavenly realities, rather than glorying in the human form and the mimetic skill of the artist; styles that once by means of 'outlines and emblems … shadowed out the Invisible'.[73] According to Ruskin, mosaic was particularly suited to this role because it was not 'adorned with any evidences of skill or science, such as might withdraw the attention from their subjects'.[74] According to Hope, the Byzantines 'imposed upon art such restraints as might prevent its too near approximation to nature' and they made up for 'the want of truth, by the upmost degree of glitter'.[75] Pollen's view of mosaic built on those of his predecessors in seeing mosaic as showing 'ignorance of form' but being 'by no means wanting in grandeur. Quite the contrary …'.[76]

Newman's discussion of the arts as such in *The Idea* is often considered in terms of Newman's aesthetic preferences, aside from the larger argument of the discourse. He discusses the arts by way of an analogy in his wider defence of the role of theology in a complete

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70   Explored in detail in Nicholls, *Unearthly Beauty*, 1–34.
71   Newman, *Idea*, 83.
72   Newman, *Idea*, 78–9.
73   Newman, *Idea*, 79.
74   Ruskin, *Works* 10, 132. According to Ruskin the aesthetic of mosaics was also determined by the need to view them clearly from a distance in the dark upper recesses of churches.
75   Hope, *An Historical Essay* I, 174.
76   Pollen, 'Structural characteristics', 141.

curriculum. Just as the arts are liable to forgetting their place and role, so too are the secular sciences which will happily assume they are the measure of all things, answering questions proper to the scientific discipline of theology. Both the rudimental style and hieratical structure of the pseudo-mosaic with its hierarchy of scale, and its representation of the Seat of Wisdom surrounded by the natural world, resonated with the idea of the correct ordering of the cosmos with everything in its proper place and subservient to God. Under the care of the Church, the holistic cultivation of the intellect with each subject in its proper place would inevitably lead to 'a loyal and generous devotion' in the university's students, just as the arts and nature in their proper place would also. The Church was the final piece of the picture, represented by means of the vine.

Structuring the natural world, supporting the Seat of Wisdom and containing the saints that look towards her in the apse, is the vine. The vine is the most overt borrowing from the medieval mosaic in the apse of San Clemente in Rome that Pollen was responding to (Figure 5.4), and there the motif of the True Vine is interpreted through the Latin inscription at the base of the composition as a representation of the Church: *Ecclesiam Christi viti similabimus isti quam Lex arentem, sed Crux facit e[ss]e virentem* (We liken the Church of Christ to this vine: the Law makes it wither but the Cross makes it bloom).[77] The vine as a Christian symbol was interpreted similarly by Lord Lindsay as 'emblematical of the Church', and in the Dublin church it represents the very same thing.[78] Knowledge alone could not produce virtue – philosophy did not give one command over the passions.[79] Teaching theology as a branch necessary to universal knowledge did not make a university Catholic – 'a direct and active jurisdiction of the Church over it' was necessary for this.[80] The university was supported, mandated and nourished by the Church in turning out Catholic students of the highest calibre, honed intellectually, morally and spiritually; a church whose authority stretched back to the early Christian period. This idea was manifested potently in the pseudo-mosaic of the apse through its iconography of the alma mater supported by the vine. The concept was supported materially and visually through the emulation of the durable, 'rude' and inherently early Christian medium of mosaic. It was no coincidence that Pollen referenced this mosaic in particular to make this point, since the Basilica of San Clemente

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77 James, *Mosaics*, 377–8.
78 Lindsay, *Sketches* I, 278.
79 Newman, *Idea*, 120.
80 Newman, *Idea*, 214.

Figure 5.4 The upper basilica of San Clemente, Rome, c. 1100. Interior view towards the apse. © Zoonar GmbH/Alamy Stock Photo

had been occupied by the Irish Dominicans since 1667, bolstering once more the connection of the Irish Catholic Church to ancient Rome.[81]

The vine of the church encircles the saints – her most venerable members – who hold their palm fronds as an emblem of peace, victory and eternal life and look and move towards the Virgin as their model in this perfect ordering of the cosmos. In his novel *Callista*, written about the early Church at the time that University Church was being built, which was clearly underpinned by an analogy between the early Christians and contemporary Catholics, Newman compares the 'strength' of the 'tumultuous, restless, apprehensive' Roman imperial world and its manifold resources with the humble, feeble Christian martyr Callista who has a peace that they never will, going beyond 'doubt, anxiety,

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81 It is also somewhat intriguing that this church, which was founded by Cardinal Anastasius, titular of the church from c. 1099–1125/6, was not a direct papal foundation. James, *Mosaics*, 375–6. Could the choice of this model for emulation have again been connected to the desire to avoid insinuations of direct papal interference in the Irish context, while still connecting the Catholic Church in the British Isles back to the authority of papal Rome? Newman also wrote on the importance of the Dominicans to education in ancient Ireland. See Newman, *The Rise and Progress of Universities* 17, 206–7.

perplexity, despondency, passion'.[82] Here the saintly 'virgins of either sex' with palm branch in hand embody such peace, converging as they do on the crowned Virgin as the Queen of Heaven. The image resonates uncannily with Callista's vision that she receives before her impending martyrdom in Newman's novel, wherein she finds herself transported to a brighter and more colourful version of her native Greece with its colours 'illuminated tenfold by a heavenly glory'; each hue 'of a beauty she had never known' which 'seemed strangely to affect all her senses at once, being fragrance and music, as well as light'. The myriad bright spirits that emerge in the vision and surround her are the saints who advance with her towards the Virgin 'arrayed more brilliantly than an oriental queen'.[83] Looking towards the Virgin as their pattern of faith, Pollen's saints of immaculate purity, formed both a focus for devotion and models for emulation in the midst of the social and political upheaval of their nineteenth-century context.

After the Enlightenment, the march of secularism and the attendant debates concerning the appropriateness of marrying education and religion, the Catholic university was to provide unity to the different branches of knowledge as part of a liberal education that would cultivate intellect and faith in turning out societal leaders of the highest calibre. Pollen's image comprised a succinct expression of Newman's 'Idea' of a university that went beyond his Dublin lectures: his vision for an education that pitted itself against pure utilitarianism and secularism was expressed most magnificently through the pseudo-mosaic in the apse, which made clear that the full authority of Rome, which was based on continued authority since the early Church, stood behind the university and its mission.

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82 Newman, *Callista*, 353–4.
83 Newman, *Callista*, 354–6.

6
Neo-Byzantinism and new visions for the future

> I have sailed the seas and come
> To the holy city of Byzantium.
>
> W. B. Yeats, 1926[1]

The significant use of Byzantine forms at University Church, as part of a response to early Christian architecture, resulted from the need to express Newman's vision for a Catholic university in its Dublin context and to elevate the minds and hearts of its members from the temporal to the eternal. Its place within the history of Victorian architectural revivalism has gone largely unexplored, however. John Francis Bentley's Westminster Cathedral (1895–1903), the seat of the Roman Catholic Archbishop, has been widely characterised as the most well-known and epitomic Neo-Byzantine building in the British Isles, but Newman and Pollen had developed a meaningful and sophisticated Romano-Byzantine basilica half a century earlier in Dublin that needs to be connected to it (Figure 6.1).[2] The late 1800s onwards witnessed a more noticeable use

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1   W. B. Yeats, 'Sailing to Byzantium' from Finneran, *The Poems of W. B. Yeats*.
2   Anne Pollen first made this connection, which seems to have gone unheeded, stressing that John Hungerford Pollen had achieved 'a result not less perfect in its degree, in the beautiful little church at Stephen's Green'. Pollen, *John Hungerford Pollen*, 262. Hungerford Pollen, whose role in the creation of the basilica has been persistently underappreciated, possibly because of Newman's fame, was later involved in the design of other Neo-Byzantine buildings in England, such as the Crown Life Assurance building discussed in Chapter 3, and was even called to consult on Westminster Cathedral itself. Curran, *Newman House*, 56. Bentley was also the pupil of Henry Clutton (1819–1893), with whom Newman collaborated on other architectural projects. On Westminster Cathedral, see De L'Hôpital, *Westminster Cathedral*; Doyle, *Westminster Cathedral*; Wharton, 'Westminster Cathedral'; Kollar, *Westminster Cathedral*; Jenkins and Harris, 'More English than the English'; Rubens, *William Richard Lethaby*, 231–43. On the mosaics, see Tedeschi, 'The mosaic landscape'.

Figure 6.1   John Francis Bentley, Westminster Cathedral, 1895–1903. Exterior view. © Niamh Bhalla

of the Byzantine style as a critique of the present in Britain, under the influence of the Arts and Crafts movement, but many of the principles so valued by this movement were realised in University Church.

Byzantine revival in British ecclesiastical design

A confident and meaningful use of Byzantine elements emerged in the Dublin church just as the first tentative steps were taken in Byzantine revival ecclesiastical design in England. There was a growing interest in the potential value of the Byzantine style for ecclesiastical design in the 1840s and 50s, but it was not until the mid-1850s that an experimental use of Byzantinising elements in church architecture emerged.[3] George Gilbert Scott introduced polychromy and a round-arched arcade

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3   See Karydis, 'Discovering the Byzantine art of building' on this emerging interest, discussed in Chapter 4.

supported by classicising columns to the 'Ruskinian' apse – variously described as being Romano-Byzantine, Byzantine or Romanesque in style – that he built two years before the opening of University Church at Camden Chapel, Camberwell, in 1854. The apse was unfortunately destroyed in the second world war.[4] Ruskin enthusiastically praised the beautiful small work, built under his influence, in his *Praeterita*.[5]

Whole churches with notable Byzantine aspects came soon after, such as architect William Tite's (1798–1873) St James's at Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, 1856–9, built at the expense of the family of the late General George Alexander Reid (1794–1852). The church is a very unusual and stylistically eclectic cruciform building with a central dome supported by an octagonal drum, polychromatic brickwork and four square turrets surmounted by concave conical roofs.[6] Albert Jenkins Humbert and Ludwig Gruner's Royal Mausoleum, built for Queen Victoria at Frogmore in 1862 followed. Both of these buildings were experimental and personal projects for their patrons, with the latter often seen as marking the beginning of Byzantine revival ecclesiastical architecture in Britain.[7] Although built according to a Greek-cross plan surmounted by a central domed octagon, the exterior of the mausoleum has a mostly Romanesque appearance, particularly on account of being built from Portland stone and granite, while the interior is decorated in a Renaissance revival style. The Byzantinising mosaics in the porch, which clearly responded to the mosaics of the mausoleum of Galla Placidia in Ravenna, c. 425–50, were created by Salviati. These early buildings with Byzantine elements were more stylistically eclectic than University Church, which espoused a more considered and ideological use of the Byzantine style.

A more confident expression of the Byzantine in church architecture is seen to have come later with buildings such as St Barnabas in Jericho, Oxford, 1869, paid for by Thomas Combe (1796–1872), the Anglo-Catholic leader of Oxford University Press and great supporter of the Pre-Raphaelites (Figure 6.2). It was designed by architect Sir Arthur Blomfield (1829–1899), the son of the Bishop Blomfield of London who was responsible for the Romanesque revival churches of Bethnal Green discussed in Chapter 4, and this church too was built in response to the needs of an expanding urban population and with similarly limited

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4   Now known only through an illustration in 'Chancel of Camden Church, Camberwell', *The Builder* 12, 8 July 1854, 362–3.

5   Ruskin, *Works* 35, 382. See also Brooks, *John Ruskin*, 56–60; Hall, 'G.F. Bodley', 251–3; Hewison, *Ruskin on Venice*, 212; Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 116.

6   Interestingly, Tite had earlier collaborated on the London & Westminster Bank, Lothbury, 1838, with Pollen's uncle Cockerell.

7   Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 104–1.

Figure 6.2 Sir Arthur Blomfield, Church of St Barnabas in Jericho, Oxford, 1869, built for Thomas Combe. Interior view towards the apse. © Niamh Bhalla

funding. As with University Church, the church was conceived as a reversion 'to the earliest arrangement of Christian Churches (namely, that of the Basilica) in its broad features'.[8] The impetus for this choice, which the architect acknowledged was a rejection of the Gothic style, was again – like many of the round-arched revival style churches discussed thus far – the desire for a wide nave with unimpeded view of the ritual, and also, most importantly, the lesser costs entailed. While Blomfield acknowledged the common debt of all architects interested in the basilican style to Gally Knight's plan of San Clemente, Combe told Pre-Raphaelite artist Holman Hunt (1827–1910) that it was modelled after the later basilica of Santa Maria Assunta on Torcello with its Byzantinising mosaics, while contemporary reports in the press claimed it was Byzantine.[9]

Although basilican in design with Byzantinising paintings in the apse, the columns and capitals of the nave are more Romanesque in their proportions and materials (Bath stone), as is the appearance of

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8   Blomfield, *Description of St. Barnabas*, 4–5.
9   Blomfield, *Description of St. Barnabas*, 4–5. Thomas Combe, Letter to Holman Hunt, 19 November 1868. Bodleian Library: MS Eng. Letter, c. 296. Discussed in Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 158, n. 158.

the exterior. It was hailed by its patron as 'the first perfect Basilica in this country', demonstrating the lack of awareness concerning Newman and Pollen's basilica across the water, which was similar in conception but different in appearance.[10] The overall vision realised at Oxford of a simple basilica with plain exterior and a luminous, affective interior – conceived purely as 'a vehicle for coloured decoration' which could be added as the project progressed – was comparable to that which had materialised in Dublin.[11] The Oxford commission, with its large golden pseudo-mosaic of Christ Pantokrator in the apse, unsurprisingly opened itself to charges of Popery and of being characteristically un-English.[12]

Some later churches entailed a much closer emulation of Byzantine architectural form and decoration, but these were the exception in the British Isles, such as John Oldrid Scott's (1841–1913) St Sophia, Bayswater, 1879, with its domed Greek-cross plan, yellow and red brick banding on the exterior and internal sheathing with marble and mosaic. Scott was no doubt influenced by his father George Gilbert Scott's marked esteem for the style, particularly the latter's lasting admiration for the interior of Hagia Sophia.[13] This building was immune to charges of un-Englishness because it was designed for the Greek Orthodox community. In fact, for some of the most significant cases of the employment of the Byzantine revival style in ecclesiastical design it was the 'un-English', ambiguous and disruptive nature of the style that formed the basis of its appeal.

Byzantinism, Catholicism and Westminster Cathedral

Some of the most noteworthy Byzantine revival buildings in the British Isles were inherently connected to the assertion of non-Protestant identities, precisely because, as Bullen has argued, the style provided a visual means of differentiation from, and challenge to, the status quo.[14] This was particularly the case for Catholics for whom the tide was

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10 Thomas Combe in a letter to Holman Hunt, 19 November 1868, Bodleian Library MS Eng. Lett. c. 296. There was one short article in which University Church was described in 'The New Roman Catholic University Church at Dublin', *The Builder* 14, 19 April 1856, 222.

11 Blomfield, *Description of St. Barnabas*, 12.

12 Discussed in Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 158–9.

13 See Chapter 4.

14 On the widespread use of the Byzantine style to disrupt and differentiate, see Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*. Of particular relevance here is the connection he makes between the building of Sainte-Marie-Majeure in Marseilles and the Catholic revival experienced under the Second Empire. *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 67.

beginning to turn on persistent post-Reformation persecution. Newman's Dublin church and Westminster Cathedral were both profound assertions of Catholic identity at pivotal moments in Catholic history, and their comparison proves enlightening in terms of understanding the history of Byzantine revival in the British Isles more fully. It was only in 1850 that Roman Catholic dioceses were re-founded in England, an event known as the 'Restoration of the Hierarchy', after their dissolution during the Reformation. Post-Reformation Catholicism had until this point comprised a network of regional expressions, despite efforts by Rome to provide structure.[15] The Restoration ushered in a new lease of life for the Roman Catholic Church in England through the activities of renowned converts like Newman and Pugin, increased conversions more generally and large-scale Irish immigration in the face of poverty across the Irish Sea.[16] The Archbishop of Westminster became, in reality, the Primate of England and Wales but his cathedral was not built until the end of the century.

Westminster Cathedral on Victoria Street was modelled on Byzantine churches, and like University Church, it was a self-conscious attempt to reassert the authority of the Roman Catholic Church, and in a manner that suited the practical needs and financial limitations of the Church.[17] The practical impetus for its erection was similar to the Dublin church in the need to put up a pragmatic building with a wide nave quickly, with decoration that was not integral to the structure, but which could be added as the project developed (Figure 6.1).[18] Cardinal Vaughan had required a church with an 'exceptionally wide nave and view of the sanctuary … unimpeded by columns or screen' which would be suited to 'congregational needs … in sight as well as hearing of the

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15 Norman, *The English Catholic Church*, 3–4; Doyle, *Mitres and Missions*, 12–35.
16 On the synthesis of Roman devotion and native English devotion, see Heimann, *Catholic Devotion*, 1–37. On the relationship of English Catholics of the post-Restoration period to penal times, see Glickman, *The English Catholic Community*. Discussed in relation to the building of Westminster Cathedral in Jenkins and Harris, 'More English than the English'.
17 Wharton, 'Westminster Cathedral', 530, demonstrates that money was the greatest determining factor.
18 Vaughan noted these practical advantages of the style in the first issue of the *Westminster Cathedral Record*. See Vaughan, 'Westminster Cathedral', 3. The attraction of a blank canvas to which decoration could be added cumulatively was also perceived as a benefit of the basilican style at St Barnabas at Jericho in Oxford. The practicalities of Byzantine architecture for the Anglican rite also had been noted earlier by Charles Robert Cockerell in his 1843 lecture at the Royal Academy, when he said there was 'no form better adapted to Protestant worship than the Eastern Church of Justinian'. He was taking aim at Neo-Gothic buildings in this regard and his sentiments were not widely shared, given the esteem with which English Protestants held the Gothic style. Cockerell, RIBA Archive, Coc\1\107\5, p. 10. Discussed in Karydis, 'Discovering the Byzantine art of building', 3.

people'.[19] Accusations of Popery were redundant within the Catholic tradition, and this greater aesthetic freedom, along with the desire to create something distinct from the prominent Gothic buildings nearby in Parliament Square, resulted in what is widely regarded as the most significant Byzantine revival building in England.

Westminster Cathedral was thus also created with an awareness of the politics of style and the authority attributed to form, given that Gothic Westminster Abbey, Protestant since the Reformation, was situated in close proximity: the choice of the Byzantine revival style was intended to make a salient statement in its context.[20] Bentley's daughter, Winefride De L'Hôpital, noted that the Cardinal was very much aware of the 'Battle of Styles' and of the fact that it would be near impossible to compete with the nearby Abbey without significant funds.[21] Westminster Cathedral was created to herald both the modernity of the Catholic Church and its rootedness in the past, and its dramatic, historicist style clearly expressed the desire for a different present and future for Catholics in Britain. It formed, as Annabel Wharton has demonstrated, the culmination of a wider tradition of church building tied to the Catholic resurgence in Britain following a brutal history of repression and the subsequent Emancipation Act of 1829.[22] It can be related in this way to Newman and Pollen's earlier activities in Dublin.

Cardinal Vaughan, for whom the church was commissioned, had initially required at Westminster an appeal to the original cathedral at Canterbury and Constantine's Church of St Peter in Rome. The request to model his new cathedral on the first church built as a result of Augustine's papal mission to England in 597, and the foremost imperial church from the early Christian period in Rome, was of course not fortuitous. Westminster from the outset was intended to trace continuity for the English Catholic Church back to early Christian Rome and to declare the ancient catholicity of the Church in England more generally.[23] Cardinal Vaughan himself declared:

> A style of architecture perfectly unique so far as London churches are concerned has been chosen – the ancient Basilican or primitive

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19   Cited in O'Donnell, 'An apology', 48.
20   Wharton discusses the prominent display of the body of seventeenth-century English Catholic martyr John Southworth as a prominent embodiment of the statement entailed in the Cathedral. *Westminster Cathedral*, 526–8.
21   De L'Hôpital, *Westminster Cathedral* I, 25–6.
22   Wharton, 'Westminster Cathedral', 528–9.
23   Kollar, *Westminster Cathedral*, 66; Jenkins and Harris, 'More English than the English', 54.

form of Christian architecture. The original cathedral of Canterbury appears to have been of this character, but there are now only a few basilican churches in England … The model for the new Cathedral is to be Constantine's Church of St Peter in Rome.[24]

Vaughan's desire at Westminster for a basilican church of the Italian type that would herald the apostolicity of their mission as conferred by Rome was similar to Newman's request of Pollen. Vaughan's architect Bentley rejected St Peter's as a model, however, and Vaughan's plan for an early Roman basilica more generally. Writing from Italy, he was unimpressed with the architecture of Rome in general, saying that 'Rome is practically a city dating from the sixteenth century, and, architecturally by no means an interesting one. Anything more brainless than this work from that date to the present it is impossible to conceive'. He was interested in the 'early Xtian work and the ruins of Imperial Rome', but he found little ancient Christian work actually remained.[25] De L'Hôpital tells us that he 'brought his most powerful arguments to bear against the adoption of a style for which he could feel neither interest nor admiration'.[26] Vaughan accepted Bentley's alternative Byzantine design inspired by Hagia Sophia, San Marco and San Vitale because it was cost effective and spacious: the advantages of the less-sculptural 'incrusted' Byzantine style were appreciated at Westminster as they had been in Dublin.[27]

The Byzantine revival style instituted by Bentley not only fitted the economic limitations of the Church, it also fulfilled its ideological needs, connecting the present Catholic Church in England to the apostolic church by means of what he described as 'a style which was absolutely primitive Christian, which was not confined to Italy, England or any other nation'.[28] Bentley further appealed to the need for an international type for the metropolitan church that was not tied to 'any national and perhaps insular characteristic'.[29] Bentley himself described the Byzantine style he employed as a development of 'the first phase of Christian architecture', which was admittedly Eastern but connected

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24 *Catholic Times*, 31 August 1894, cited in Wharton, 'Westminster Cathedral', 530.

25 Letter 59 to Charles Hadfield, 17 February 1894, in Howell, *Letters*. Discussed in Howell, *John Francis Bentley*, 120.

26 De L'Hôpital, *Westminster Cathedral* I, 25.

27 By this time the architecture of Hagia Sophia had been popularised by Lethaby and Swainson, *The Church of Sancta Sophia*. See also Nelson, *Hagia Sophia*, 105–28.

28 De L'Hôpital, *Westminster Cathedral* I, 26; Wharton, 'Westminster Cathedral', 539, 532, 544.

29 De L'Hôpital, *Westminster Cathedral* I, 26; Wharton, 'Westminster Cathedral', 531–40.

to the Hellenic genius.[30] His interpretation of the Byzantine tradition was intended, in a similar manner to the Dublin church, to summon the glories of early Christian architecture while bypassing any tensions around nationalism. The reasons for the employment of the style echoed the impetus behind the use of the Romano-Byzantine style in Dublin. Similar sentiments were at play in Dublin and London in the desire to summon up the riches of the ancient church and its continuity to the present day, bypassing issues of nationalism and with limited means. The resulting buildings, however, were very different.

Whereas Pollen had understood Roman and Byzantine churches to exist in a continuum belonging to early Christian basilican architecture, Bentley aimed to set them in opposition to one another, saying:

> Byzantine must not be confounded with what is generally and loosely called the Basilica style … The new Cathedral will, in style, be the same as that in which St Sophia at Constantinople is built. The nearest approach to it in Italy are the churches of St Mark's, Venice, and San Vitale, at Ravenna.[31]

Bentley had been unable to visit Hagia Sophia in Constantinople but asserted that San Vitale in Ravenna, which he had visited, and William Richard Lethaby (1857–1931) and Harold Swainson's (1868–1894) *The Church of Sancta Sophia, Constantinople: A Study of Byzantine Building*, published in 1894, the year he was commissioned, were sufficient to inform his design.[32] The result was an aisled basilica much grander in scale than the church in Dublin, with three shallow domes over the nave with a further dome over the sanctuary.[33]

The Westminster church responded to Byzantine architecture through its employment of the dome – a structural element characteristic of many, but not all, Byzantine churches – and with its cascading external massing, towers, striated brickwork with white stone, and fenestration framed by embracing arches. Bentley desired a Byzantine aesthetic for the interior with the lower parts of the church clad in marble and the upper portions – the domes, arches and vaults – clothed in mosaic, but he did not live to see its completion and, indeed, the mosaics are still incomplete today. The interior, despite being domed and on a much grander scale,

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30 He was echoing in this way the thought of Lethaby in *The Church of Sancta Sophia*.

31 Burns and Oates, *Guide*, 33.

32 Lethaby and Swainson, *The Church of Sancta Sophia*. See De L'Hôpital, *Westminster Cathedral* I, 35; Nelson, *Hagia Sophia*, 112–19; Wharton, 'Westminster Cathedral', 532.

33 342 ft in length, 112 ft high, 60 ft wide. Wharton, *Westminster Cathedral*, 550, note 1.

Figure 6.3   John Francis Bentley, Westminster Cathedral, 1895–1903. Interior view towards the apse. © Niamh Bhalla

is similar in conception to the Dublin church in its use of polychromatic marble inlay, colourful marble columns with Byzantinising capitals in a lighter tone, round-arched arcades and the use of mosaic, from 1902 to the present (Figures 6.3 and 6.4).[34]

Annabel Wharton argues that the essence of the building's form was an emulation of Lethaby and Swainson's Victorian *representation* of a Byzantine building as 'rational'. The resulting predictable stability of plan and arrangement of form that it models defies the 'voluptuous volatility' and 'curvilinear complexity' of the true Byzantine arrangement of form and void, perfected at Hagia Sophia.[35] Wharton also maintains that the Byzantine revival design at Westminster failed to achieve its mission of obtaining greater prominence for English Catholics and that it faded into obscurity precisely because of its close 'associations with the East, the feminine, weak, exotic Other'.[36] The calculated risk taken to differentiate the cathedral from

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34   The Chapel of the Holy Souls, with mosaics installed between 1902–3, is the only part of the church completed fully as envisaged by Bentley given his death in March 1902 when the works were in progress. Tedeschi, 'The mosaic landscape' is an excellent study of the mosaics.

35   Wharton, 'Westminster Cathedral', 535–6.

36   Wharton, 'Westminster Cathedral', 546. Jenkins and Harris contest her reading and chart its prominence as a building articulating Catholic primacy. Jenkins and Harris, 'More English than the English', 53. Howell, *John Francis Bentley*, 129, charts the architectural influence of Westminster Cathedral on other buildings. On the association of Byzantium with the feminine exotic 'other', see James, '"As the actress said to the bishop …"'.

Figure 6.4   John Francis Bentley, Westminster Cathedral, 1895–1903. Detail of marble columns with Byzantinising capitals. © Niamh Bhalla

the Protestant buildings nearby did not stimulate wider emulation because the East was ultimately 'the object of empire, not the vehicle of its representation', and the 'pervasive Gibbonian sense of Byzantium' endured to the point that even Bentley himself eventually downplayed the Eastern origins of the forms, focussing instead on continuity from Rome and Venice.[37] Regardless, the inception of both buildings was comparable: Westminster Cathedral, like University Church, used Byzantine forms as an expression of ancient Christianity to stress continuity from Rome for the Catholic Church in England and Ireland, respectively, and to express a new vision for the future of the same persecuted religion.

It is most interesting that the first Byzantine revival church in Scotland was similarly created for a Catholic congregation. The Third Marquess of Bute, John Patrick Crichton-Stuart (1847–1900), whose conversion to Catholicism was seemingly driven, or at least informed, by his esteem for the medieval period, patronised the creation of St Sophia, Galston, designed by architect Sir Robert Rowand Anderson (1834–1921) and dedicated in 1886.[38] The church was intended by Bute to take Hagia Sophia as its model.

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37   Wharton, 'Westminster Cathedral', 541–4.
38   McKinstry, *Rowand Anderson*.

The small cruciform church, built in red brick with a conical roof was not closely informed by its prototype, however, but the use of curvilinear undulating forms in its interior and its central dome pierced by round arched windows to flood the interior of the central crossing with light emulates its essence in many ways.[39] Bute's interest in and use of the Byzantine style at Galston reflected the increasing fascination within the Arts and Crafts with the dome as a defining feature of Byzantine architecture, which resulted from increased exposure to the monuments of Greece, as opposed to Italy, towards the end of the century. It is again telling, however, that the first stirrings of Byzantine revival architecture in Scotland resulted from the efforts of a Catholic convert patron who was convinced of the value of the medieval for the modern.

Looking ahead to the Arts and Crafts movement

The Dublin church was precocious in its use of the Romano-Byzantine in an attempt to reconstitute Catholic identity in the British Isles, and it did so through artistic principles that were persuasively articulated by Ruskin, but which came fully into their own in relation to Byzantine revival design in particular towards the end of the century. The prioritisation of practical everyday needs, the use of local materials and craftsmen, the homage paid to nature, and the close relationship between design and execution, all in an appeal to medieval art, were concepts originally promulgated by Pugin and Ruskin and worked out in relation to Gothic revival design for the most part, as well as in earlier round-arched revival designs such as the Museum Building at Trinity College Dublin (see Figure 3.12). These ideas evolved and assumed renewed vigour and wider currency later in the century in relation to Byzantine design through the work of members of the Arts and Crafts movement, who had greater exposure to the domed Byzantine churches of Greece and the East. However, an early and sustained use of early Christian and Byzantine design according to these principles was expressed for the first time in ecclesiastical design in the British Isles at University Church. The Dublin church needs to be included within the history of Byzantinism and its connection to the

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39   On the connection between Bute's medievalism and his conversion, along with a discussion of this church, see the lecture given by Ruth Macrides, 'The Scottish connection'. See also Macrides, 'What I want'.

Arts and Crafts movement, which is only now beginning to be more fully understood.[40]

The Arts and Crafts movement – a nebulous network of concepts, practices and practitioners, generally seen as having begun in the second half of the nineteenth century and continuing into the early twentieth century – maintained and developed the desire to reform design and its processes which had emerged earlier in the nineteenth century.[41] A belief in the socially transformative potential of good design united many of its 'members', most of whom also saw medieval art as the foundation of the modern because it spurned the constrictions of strict mimesis. Medieval artists were envisioned as producing work imaginatively for the collective good of their communities. This sentiment was most famously embodied in the work of William Morris (1834–1896) who sought not to emulate the Middle Ages but to imaginatively channel their spirit into work that was inherently modern.[42] In practice, this meant creatively responding to medieval forms and principles rather than mindlessly emulating medieval styles. Pollen understood and expressed this through his imaginative response to the Roman and Byzantine basilicas that he had encountered on his travels in the Dublin church, which signalled a new identity for young Catholics across the British Isles. The creative employment of early Christian, Byzantine and medieval forms in fashioning something inherently practical and modern echoed Newman's accretive understanding of the development of Catholicism: just as the early Church could not be reproduced – rather its truths preserved by the Catholic Church were developed and expressed in their present age – so too the Dublin church was a development of and response to an early basilica. Their church anticipated in many ways the use of the Byzantine in the Arts and Crafts movement later in the century which also responded to Byzantium to signal new directions for the present.

Morris attempted to move away from the Oriental Byzantine imaginary, influenced by Gibbon, marked by exoticism, despotism, excess, irrationality and idolatry, and he recreated Byzantium according

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40 Blakesley, *The Arts and Crafts*; Kotoula, 'Arts and Crafts', 78–9; Kakissis, *Byzantium and British Heritage*.
41 The start and end point of this nebulous movement are contentious: 1880–1910 is often suggested. The importance of medievalisms to many of its protagonists is less contested – although the appropriation of medieval culture from beyond Europe, including Byzantium, needs greater work. See Cumming and Kaplan, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, 9–31, esp. 9–12, 15.
42 For discussion and further bibliography, see Marsh, 'William Morris and medievalism'; Banham and Harris, *William Morris*.

to the highly romanticised, egalitarian social ideals of the Arts and Crafts Movement as a bridge between East and West where artisans created together in freedom and autonomy, fashioning art that was free and vital. He delivered his new Byzantium in 'Gothic Architecture', first in 1889 as a lecture and then published as a book in 1893.[43] Following Ruskin, he celebrated Byzantine architecture in terms of its 'simplicity of structure and outline of mass' and its 'amazing delicacy of ornament'; it was 'bright and clear in colour, pure in line'.[44] Like earlier writers of the nineteenth century, including Pollen, he charted the seminality of the style as growing out of and transforming the Greco-Roman tradition and influencing the medieval architectural styles of Europe. Lethaby, the disciple of Morris, took up the mantle and wrote about Byzantine art, architecture and society in similar utopian terms in his influential *The Church of Sancta Sophia, Constantinople*, which characterised Byzantine buildings with regard to the integrity of their structural methods and good craftsmanship, artistic autonomy and the benefits of the guild system.

The understanding of the Byzantine tradition found in the Arts and Crafts movement is most often traced to Ruskin, but the seeds for this thought were present in earlier English architectural histories of the nineteenth century, particularly Hope's *Historical Essay*, which argued that the very reason that Constantine founded Constantinople was for freedom from the 'restraints' of the pagan history and tradition that surrounded him in Rome – the new city allowed Christianity to develop in freedom and the same stood for Christian architecture in early Byzantium. Without the ready supply of buildings to be repurposed or the stream of spolia used to construct new churches quickly – that 'supply of magnificent materials pulled in pieces in order to be recombined into these new churches' – artists had to turn to local materials and methods. A new wholly Christian architecture was born that was 'different from that of paganism'.[45] Freeman ventured further, saying that the artists 'were not only at liberty, but were absolutely driven to find their own materials and their own architecture'.[46] For Freeman, Hagia Sophia had the honour of being 'the first truly Christian architecture that the world had seen'.[47] Although the seeds for this romanticised view of freedom, necessity and vitality in the Christian East were present from an earlier

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43   Morris, *Gothic Architecture*.
44   Morris, *Gothic Architecture*, 175–6.
45   Hope, *An Historical Essay* I, 121.
46   Freeman, *A History*, 165.
47   Freeman, *A History*, 168.

date, Lethaby and his circle elevated the Byzantine within the broader concept of the medieval and made Hagia Sophia available for the medieval imaginary of the Arts and Crafts movement.[48] It was Lethaby's book that inspired the construction of Westminster Cathedral, although this was somewhat ironic since Lethaby himself thought it impossible to imitate Byzantine buildings and that only the methods and attitudes of Byzantine craftsmen could be emulated.[49] It was the freedom of medieval craftsmen, most poetically lauded by Ruskin, that was to be imitated.

Under the influence of its main protagonists, the use of the Byzantine tradition within the Arts and Crafts movement became closely connected to a group of British architects and scholars associated with the British School in Athens, founded in 1886, whose outputs constitute what is now known as the Byzantine Research Fund (BRF) Archive, a significant collection of photographs and architectural drawings of Byzantine monuments. The activities of this group encouraged the expansion of Byzantine studies in both Britain and Greece, beginning with Robert Weir Schultz (1860–1951) and Sidney Howard Barnsley (1865–1926), who travelled to Greece for the first time from 1888–90 to record and study the Byzantine and post-Byzantine monuments there, funded by a travel grant from the Royal Academy of Arts, along with contributions from Byzantine enthusiast and scholar Edwin Freshfield (1832–1918) and Lord Bute. Inspired by the work of leading Arts and Crafts thinkers such as Lethaby – Richard Norman Shaw's (1831–1912) chief assistant when Barnsley was apprenticed to him – their research was undertaken with a view to invigorating their own practice in terms of integrity to materials, authenticity in design and decoration, and efficiency and pragmatism in construction.[50] Indeed, Lethaby had directly encouraged Schultz and Barnsley to travel there to engage in their mission of documenting and advocating for the Byzantine monuments of Greece. They were followed between 1907–10 by Walter Sykes George (1881–1962) and William Harvey (1865–1926), who continued recording the Byzantine monuments in Greece following in the footsteps of their mentors.[51] More than 50 buildings were documented accurately from 1888, and the

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48 See also Lethaby, *Architecture, Mysticism and Myth*; Rubens, *William Richard Lethaby*; Holder, 'Byzantine art'.
49 Lethaby and Swainson, *The Church of Sancta Sophia*, vi.
50 Kotoula, 'A piece of Sherlock Holmes', 146; Kakissis, 'The Byzantine Research Fund'. See also Whitley, *British School*.
51 Kakissis, 'The Byzantine Research Fund', 153–4; Kotoula, 'Arts and Crafts', 75–6; Butler, 'The Byzantine Research'.

outputs of these efforts are now included in the invaluable resource that is the BRF Archive.[52]

Dimitra Kotoula has discussed the direct impact of these research trips in the work of Schultz and Barnsley in particular, who were responsible for some of the earliest Byzantine expressions within British Arts and Crafts architecture.[53] Perhaps most relevant as a comparison with the Dublin church is Barnsley's only church, the Church of the Holy Wisdom in Lower Kingswood, Surrey, commissioned in 1891 upon his return, by Freshfield, who had also been part of the creation of St Sophia in Bayswater, and businessman Sir Henry Cosmo Orme Bonsor (1848–1929). The church, dedicated in 1892 and belonging in this case to the Anglican rite, was loosely modelled on the minimalist church of Hagia Eirene in Constantinople.[54] The small scale, restraint and simplicity of the structure and the harmonious application of polychromatic decoration, although more limited than the Dublin church in being restricted largely to the apse, were not dissimilar in essence to University Church. The simple rectangular plan (with shallow aisles in this case) and central apse were also based on early Christian basilicas. Mary Greensted suggests that the unassuming brick and Ham stone exterior with pitched roof, which is not typical of Byzantine design, bears comparison with some of the smaller churches that Barnsley visited during his time in Greece, particularly the late Byzantine Hagios Vasileios in Arta, north-west Greece (Figure 6.5).[55] The Byzantinising aesthetic of the apse clad in marble and mosaic is particularly comparable in conception to Pollen's decorative scheme in Dublin.

The ornate apse at Lower Kingswood commands the attention of the viewer (Figure 6.6). A later band of native flowers in mosaic, from 1902, surmounts a veneer of pale grey marble on the walls of the chancel apse, while gold mosaic with a simple cross, an emulation of the design in Hagia Eirene, fills the conch. Schultz later described the chancel as 'some of the best and most skilfully arranged marble and mosaic in the country'.[56] Pollen's lively and varied, yet restrained, ornamentation,

52   Kakissis, 'The Byzantine Research Fund', 143–5.

53   Kotoula, 'A piece of Sherlock Holmes'.

54   Hagia Eirene was first constructed in the fourth century, it was rebuilt following the Nika riots in the sixth century and then modified and redecorated in the eighth century following an earthquake. Carved capitals displayed inside and outside the Church of the Holy Wisdom were brought back from the East by Freshfield. Nelson, *Hagia Sophia*, 189–90. On Sidney Barnsley, the Byzantine and the Arts and Crafts, see Greensted, 'Sidney Barnsley'.

55   Greensted, 'Sidney Barnsley', 224, fig. 9.4.

56   Schultz, 'Reason in building', 37. Some of the beautiful marbles of the apse, which include not only Cipollino but also Verde Antico and Levanto, were cut from Roman columns.

Figure 6.5 Howard Barnsley, Church of the Holy Wisdom, Lower Kingswood, Surrey, 1891–2, built for Edwin Freshfield and Sir Henry Cosmo Orme Bonsor. Exterior. © Niamh Bhalla

which animated but did not dominate the structure, anticipated such later work within the Arts and Crafts movement.[57] Barnsley displayed a similar feel to Pollen for meaningfully exploiting the vein of the stone as in Byzantine design; his thin slabs of inlay were arranged so as to create a pattern, just as Pollen's were in the pseudo-columns of the nave walls. Schultz said the stunningly veined slabs of Cipollino were 'carefully selected and arranged with a view to giving bright contrast of colour and a general richness of effect, but always in a broad and masterly manner'.[58] Similar to the Dublin design, the roof of the Surrey church was wooden with a painted floral schema, predominantly in red, green and white, although it was barrel vaulted rather than flat. Barnsley, like Pollen, painted the roof himself, modelling the ideal continuity between design and execution that had been broken by the industrial era, and which was reviled by members of the Arts and Crafts. Whereas the Byzantinism of the Catholic buildings discussed thus far signalled discontent with the predicament of Catholics, Barnsley's church used the Byzantine to create a beautiful rejection of contemporary design conditions. According to

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57 On the Arts and Crafts and the fascination with animation, see Kotoula and Kakissis, 'Recording Byzantine mosaics', 263–6.

58 Schultz, 'Byzantine art', 249–50.

Figure 6.6 Howard Barnsley, Church of the Holy Wisdom, Lower Kingswood, Surrey, 1891–2, built for Edwin Freshfield and Sir Henry Cosmo Orme Bonsor. Interior view towards the apse. © Niamh Bhalla

Schultz, it comprised a 'genuine effort to get as near as possible to more reasonable conditions of building, and which gave a chance for the various craftsmen employed to express their individuality'.[59]

The appropriation and reimagining of the Byzantine as suited to modern purposes by the British Arts and Crafts movement because of the integrity of its materials and the functionality of its design is only beginning to be understood, but Newman and Pollen's church should form part of that consideration.[60] The use of the medieval Byzantine imaginary in the Dublin church, not to closely emulate any particular church but to harness the strengths of Roman and Byzantine design to create something modern in its impetus that agitated materially and visually for societal transformation, anticipated the later ethos of the Arts and Crafts movement. So too did Newman and Pollen's commitment, albeit from necessity, to a reasonable and cost-effective solution. Their convictions concerning the social and aesthetic benefits of using local materials worked innovatively by Irish craftsmen also resonated with the later movement, along with their use of native organic motifs to create a living and timeless tradition, much of which was inspired by both the

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59   Schultz, 'Reason in building', 37.
60   See Schultz, 'Reason in building'.

nearby Museum Building and Ruskin's thought. These latter aspects of the Dublin design resonated with the fidelity of the Arts and Crafts movement to a sense of place 'through the use in architecture and craft of regionally specific materials, methods and motifs' as it developed out of the work of Pugin and Ruskin and into the work of Morris and others.[61]

The necessarily close relationship between architectural form and natural environment was famously articulated by Ruskin and expanded and developed by the Arts and Crafts movement into what Morris would describe as 'the sympathy between the work of art, architecture, and the land they were made for'.[62] Byzantine capitals were deemed particularly important in this regard for the Arts and Crafts, providing a seminal node in the connection of architectural form and nature because, according to Ruskin, they showed 'a greater love of nature' than classical capitals, as discussed in Chapter 3.[63] The selection of forms from the regional habitat, later developed in the works of Arts and Crafts architects, was put into practice through the use of Irish craftsmen to carve expressions of native flora and fauna on the Byzantinising capitals that punctuate the church, after the example set by the Museum Building.[64]

Irish materials, sculptural forms and pictorial representations were used to create something that connected back to the ancient church, but which was entirely new in its impetus, built for the nineteenth-century needs of Catholics. In Newman and Pollen's vision for a better Catholic future wherein modern heathenism would be smashed in the British Isles, they used art and architecture in a similar manner to the Arts and Crafts movement's socially utopian medievalisms, which Rosie Ibbotson argues rested on the merging of history and hope.[65] The use of the medieval imaginary to simultaneously resist, reform and increase the advances of modernism is palpable in this tangible and precocious Romano-Byzantine manifestation in Dublin.[66]

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61 On these ideals in the Arts and Crafts movement, see Kotoula, 'A piece of Sherlock Holmes', 148–9.

62 Morris, *The Collected Works*, 22. First developed in the first essay of Ruskin's *Poetry in Architecture* in Ruskin, *Works* 1. Developed also by Lethaby in *Architecture, Mysticism*.

63 *Works* 10, 160.

64 Kotoula, 'A piece of Sherlock Holmes', 149. The respect of the Arts and Crafts for the Byzantine capital and its connection to nature is fully developed in forthcoming article by Dimitra Kotoula, 'A piece of nature'.

65 Ibbotson, 'Revisiting the medievalism'.

66 By the time of the Arts and Crafts movement such medievalism had become entrenched in Victorian society, but the Arts and Crafts movement reinvigorated belief in its transformative potential. See Ibbotson, 'Revisiting the medievalism'. See also more generally Alexander, *Medievalism*.

New visions for the future

Newman and Pollen's use of the Romano-Byzantine to critique the present and inform the future forms an important expression of nineteenth century revivalist architecture that emerged as Newman's aims intersected with 'local realities'.[67] Their precocious use of the Romano-Byzantine – not in a picturesque, whimsical or eclectic manner, but with all of the power, seriousness and 'masculinity' attributed to the lofty style of Gothic, as first attributed to the Byzantine style by Ruskin – is significant.[68] The Dublin church embodied a willingness to risk association with what was often perceived as an eastern style in the complex Irish setting, in an intentional effort to avoid the complications of the Gothic style for this prominent and public expression of a Catholic university. The erection of something practical but also somewhat strikingly 'other' was deemed necessary by Newman in endeavouring to establish a university for a subjugated religious group. It was ultimately the semiotic ambiguity of the Romano-Byzantine style that appealed in this context, in allowing the possibility of sailing away from a current undesirable reality, towards a utopian future.

Like many of their contemporaries, Newman and Pollen understood architecture to be communicative and affective – particularly in relation to religious and political ideas. In Newman's eyes, this building was to be used by Catholics from across the British Isles and beyond. Newman's adoption of the Romano-Byzantine can be viewed simultaneously as a calculated stylistic choice in the difficult context in which he was operating, and as a manifestation of his desire to look beyond that to a larger Catholic identity, in what perhaps amounted to an initial under-estimation of the difficulties that presented themselves. Newman was not opposed to the use of the Gothic in Ireland. For his own private chapel in Dublin, Newman wanted the Gothic style, which he admired intellectually.[69] At the same time, in his acknowledgement of Gothic's potential connection to past ceremonial and nationalism, Newman was aware of the pervasive conflation of the medieval with nationalistic vernaculars and the issues that this might cause in expressing a unified and prominent identity for Catholics across the British Isles and beyond, as he wished to do through University Church.

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67 On this idea, see Crinson, *Empire Building*, 7.
68 See Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 122–5.
69 A letter on 27 November 1854 to John Stanislas Flanagan shows him bargaining for funding from the university finance committee to build a temporary chapel next to his house at 6 Harcourt Street in a plain Gothic style. *Letters and Diaries* 16, 308–9.

The basilican and the Byzantine were more ambiguous and contested as signifiers than Gothic and thus ripe for Newman and Pollen to establish new meaning through them. The liminality of the Byzantine style in particular – positioned somewhere between East and West, at once Christian but Orthodox, both familiar and exotic – made it shifting, nebulous and liminal for the Victorians. Because of this, it had the potential to be more malleable. The semiotic otherness of Byzantium, discussed at length in Chapter 2, left it open to manipulation. It was unclear, and still is, whether Byzantium should be demarcated as a geopolitical entity or defined in terms of its connection to Eastern Orthodoxy. It was difficult to place, being born of Rome and yet having a close connection to the Ottoman Empire. Its position, perceived as bridging the Christian West and Islamic East, also placed it precariously in terms of the racial theories that dominated Victorian thought.[70] Gothic had dominated Victorian medievalism(s), in part because figures such as Ruskin had argued for its appropriateness and virtue in northern Europe, while Byzantium had fallen somewhat awkwardly within the Aryan/Oriental divide. As Freeman asserted in his influential *History of Architecture* (1849), the Byzantine 'is not ancient, modern or medieval … it is Oriental, alien in language, government and general feeling'.[71] The Byzantine style's liminality and ambiguity may ultimately have made it easier for Newman and Pollen to use it to cast a striking new vision in a difficult context. In his Dublin lectures and writing, Pollen in particular charted an innovative, and not widely adopted, narrative of the continuity of the basilica, proposing it as an inherently Christian architectural type between Rome and the domed churches of Byzantium. And at University Church, he similarly used it to chart the continuity of the early Christian church into the Middle Ages and to the present, to challenge the status quo for Catholics across the British Isles.

The connections of the Gothic with nationalisms and the dogmatic assertion of the Gothic as the most Christian style of architecture by Protestants and Catholics alike had made it difficult for early Christian basilican and Byzantine forms to thrive in Britain and Ireland. Furthermore, the disparaging account of the early Church put forward by Gibbon in *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* had negatively influenced and distanced the British from both the Eastern Roman Empire and the medieval Catholic Church alike.[72] The use of the

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70 Discussed in Chapter 2.
71 Freeman, *A History*, 164–5.
72 On the first forty years of response to Gibbon see Womersley, *Gibbon and the Watchmen*.

Romano-Byzantine in the context of building University Church must be seen as a response to Gibbon's influence as it expressed itself across British intellectual life. According to J. B. Bullen, the attraction of the Byzantine was its value to express discontent with the present: for the Arts and Crafts movement, the style was used to refute the ramifications of industrialisation, but for Newman and Pollen it was used as part of a broad 'early Christian' conception to redefine the predicament of Catholics. With a delicious irony, the Dublin church used the Romano-Byzantine style to challenge Enlightenment and anti-Catholic sentiments that were supported by Gibbon's thought and to frame a new identity for disenfranchised Catholics across the British Isles.

It was for its practicality and its sanctified antiquity and gravitas that Newman desired a basilican style to connect the Catholic Church to its roots in ancient Rome. For Pollen, the Byzantine basilica was born of the Roman tradition and sat in a continuum of hallowed early Christian architecture, and it inspired much of his interior at University Church. Their use of the Byzantine style came at a turning point when the Oriental picturesque Byzantium of travel writers was being transformed into a more historically informed and serious reception, intended to define modernity. The use of Irish materials and motifs for forms and artworks that responded to different periods of church history created an expression of continuity from Christian antiquity that situated the Catholics of the British Isles as heirs of Rome, challenging the oppressive context which had made the university necessary. In this context, Newman and Pollen used a lesser-known and more liminal Romano-Byzantine style to define a new present in terms of the past of the Church. The 'rudimental' nature of the pictorial enhancements and the colourful decorative incrustation of the basilican framework were apt to move the minds and hearts of those present to thoughts of divine beauty, and thus greater devotion, without the danger of inspiring admiration for the genius of the artist.

Like Irish poet W. B. Yeats after them, quoted at the outset of this chapter, Newman and Pollen sought to rise above the exigencies of their situation, to connect to the contemplation of eternity through a style that grew out of but exceeded the natural world.[73] Where Yeats yearned for transcendence and to escape the political turmoil of Ireland through the golden abstraction of Byzantine art, Newman and Pollen's careful decision regarding its use in their Dublin context came from a desire to move beyond politics and nationalisms, to larger issues of

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73   For discussion of Yeats and his response to Byzantium, see Nelson, *Hagia Sophia*, 129.

faith and intellect.[74] It was the semantic ambiguity of the style – at once Christian and other – that allowed the style to be used for distinctly modern ends by Newman and Pollen and then by the Arts and Crafts movement after them, which in turn influenced Yeats. Indeed, it was precisely the strangeness or otherness of San Marco that had first delighted Ruskin, and he embraced the authentic Christianity of the Byzantine style, separating it from its Catholicism as a gospel 'text' that could be read by all faithful Christians: its beautiful Christian liminality made it malleable to new meanings.

It was ultimately Ruskin's work that forged a more accessible path for the use of the Byzantine style – first expressed in the British Isles in basilican iterations like University Church – as a mode to express discontent with the present and a different view for the future, particularly in relation to the decline of faith. Ruskin argued that contemporary Venice evidenced decay and decline, with San Marco standing as a testimony to the purity and beauty of its former self, at the heart of what was a once glorious civilisation brought to its knees through arrogance, capitalism and unbelief. For Ruskin, San Marco was a warning to contemporary England: the colours of the building's marbles were a message once written in blood concerning the ultimate judgement and justice of God.[75] Ruskin's was a markedly different characterisation of the Byzantine, not as the purveyor of decline but as a beacon of beauty, and an expression of true faith in the midst of an unsatisfactory present.

These sentiments manifested in a consistent and effective expression by means of the Romano-Byzantine in ecclesiastical architecture for the first time in the British Isles at Newman University Church in Dublin. It was Newman and Pollen who rose to Ruskin's challenge in *The Stones of Venice*, when he accused Catholics of failing to live up to their role as maintainer of the religious arts: 'the Protestant had despised the arts, and the Rationalist corrupted them. But what has the Romanist done meanwhile?'[76] Their Romano-Byzantine basilica used architectural and decorative forms to stand apart from the unsatisfactory surrounding context and to assert, by means of an intelligent and affective visual analogy, a continuous identity for Catholics in the

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74 Yeats's understanding of Byzantine art was informed by his visit to Ravenna in 1907 and Sicily in 1924 where the mosaic figures there suggested to him 'an imagination absorbed in the contemplation of Eternity'. This comment was made in the story 'The Tables of the Law', 1908, and subsequently deleted. It is quoted in Albright, *W. B. Yeats*, 630, and discussed in relation to Yeats's response to Byzantium in Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, 10.

75 Ruskin, *Works* 10, 140–1. See also Hewison, *Ruskin on Venice*, 5, 219.

76 Ruskin, *Works* 9, 58.

British Isles, which stretched back to the early Church, in defiance of both secularists and Protestants alike. This visual analogy legitimated Newman's mission to turn out erudite Catholic young men who would assert their place in society, just as the Church had done from the fourth century onwards.

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'*Newman University Church, Dublin* is an important contribution to the burgeoning study of historistic architecture of the nineteenth century. In studying the larger contexts of the church, Niamh Bhalla illumines the aspirations of Cardinal Newman for the university that he directed and Catholicism in Ireland and the United Kingdom.'
Robert S. Nelson, Yale University

'A riveting analysis of the University Church and its intellectual background. Niamh Bhalla steers us effortlessly through the many strands of architectural and religious thought that lie behind Newman's church, while revealing its seminal place in the history of the Byzantine revival.'
Roger Stalley, Trinity College Dublin

In 1854, John Henry Newman, one of the foremost intellectual figures of the nineteenth century, was officially installed as the rector of the first Catholic university in Ireland. University Church (constructed in 1855–6) was Newman's first objective when he agreed to the rectorship and it can be considered as a tangible manifestation of the idea behind the unprecedented Catholic university in Dublin – the posing of an erudite Catholic alternative to post-Enlightenment secularism and Protestant hegemony through a style-based analogy to the early Church.

Despite physically embodying what Newman wished to achieve in and through his new university, this 'early Christian' style church, which drew upon Roman and Byzantine basilicas, has received little attention. This book charts for the first time the significant place that the building occupies within the history of Victorian revivalist architecture. Niamh Bhalla explores the meaningful connection between the church's context and the ambiguity of its 'early Christian' style. In the intersection of these two things, a significant monument was created. The study of University Church therefore provides an effective lens to understand more comprehensively the architectural revivalism that dominated the nineteenth century, particularly the first stirrings of basilican and Byzantine revivalist architectures in the British Isles.

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