

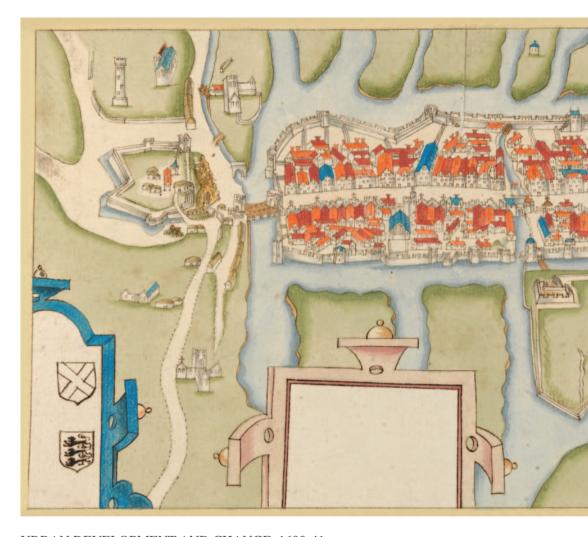
An historical geography of the Atlantic port city of Cork, 1600-1715

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Ireland was rather fragmented, with people defining their cultural identities and political allegiances differently. The majority of the population was Catholic, largely comprising the Gaelic Irish living beyond the decree of the official state apparatus in the countryside, and the Old English (who were descendants of the Anglo-Normans) living in the Pale and the walled towns. The Munster Plantation, beginning in the mid-1580s, saw parts of the countryside also inhabited by New English Protestant settlers. In the years that followed, the escalation of the conquest resulted in a rigorous process of colonisation aimed at making Ireland both Protestant and English. As royal authority expanded, the towns and countryside experienced a succession of political, social and economic transformations which profoundly changed the make-up of Ireland's leadership and landownership, along with the social distribution of its wealth.¹

The region of south Munster featured recurrently in the conquest as a result of its perception amongst foreigners that it contained unexploited riches.² As a strategically located port town, early modern Cork was profoundly impacted by the socio-political changes brought about by the expanding British Empire. At the same time, its economic fortunes were boosted by the consolidated exchange economy of the early modern capitalist world system, which relied upon a much-expanded international urban network and enhanced access to commodity and capital markets. Many changes to the natural environment resulted from the construction works undertaken to develop the individual components of this expanding network.³ This article will concentrate for the most part on investigating, describing and comprehending the urban historical geographies of Cork's physical transformation from a walled town into an enlarged Atlantic port city from 1600 to 1715.

^{1 –} Detail of 'The Towne of Corke in Ireland', c.1601, illustrating the central waterway



URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE, 1600-41

Sir Geoffrey Fenton, labelled Cork as one of the main 'maritime' settlements 'of the province [of Munster]'. Cork then possessed a very distinctive topography that amplified its unique sense of place. Located within a marshy estuarine environment, the specificity of its geographical setting is evident from the Irish word *corcach* (meaning marsh) and the place name Corcach Laoi. The latter hints not only at its location in the valley of the River Lee, but at the ensuing settlement of a void 'of outwash channels and alluvium, which left an island site as a crucial crossing point between the ridges to the north and south'. Geology also played a part in the forging of a distinctive architectural character. Over the course of time, local supplies of carboniferous limestone and dark red sandstone were used in the construction of the town walls, along with its castles and towers. This mixture of red and white gave the built environment a 'unique mottled effect'.



Cork's layout in early modern times is evident from a number of historic maps. These depict a walled town built on two low-lying estuarine islands of the Lee, namely the North Island and South Island. This settlement was located between the river's north and south channels and surrounded by high hills to the north, lower hills to the south, and a series of marshes and waterways to the east and west. When compared to the pictorial Pacata Hibernia map of Cork in c.1587, a colour representation of c.1601 (entitled 'The Towne of Corke in Ireland')8 displays a number of new features (Plate 1). The latter map, which is orientated with west at the top, depicts the main street of the walled town in white. It can be seen running along a north-south axis along the line of the present-day North Main Street and South Main Street. The early modern main street was typically fronted by three-storey-high buildings. These were aligned in an eastwest direction, with their gable ends fronting onto the main street. The roofs of the principal buildings are shown in blue in the c.1601 map, while the domestic (or residential) buildings are distinguished by their red- and orange-coloured roofs. Narrow lanes are shown leading at right

angles from the main street, eastwards and westwards to the town walls. This street pattern can be categorised as 'chequered',9 as it resembled the 'plot-determined layout' of other Irish towns.¹¹¹ Located in-between the lanes in the map are individually owned properties known as burgage plots, also running at right angles from the main street to the town walls. These long and narrow plots were especially 'suited to commercial premises in which the house frontage occupied a small area, allowing a large number of houses to front on to the market- and trading-places'.¹¹ Excavations at Kyrl's Quay/North Main Street in 1992 found that the lines of property boundaries to the east of North Main Street had 'remained virtually unchanged for almost 700 years', with each successive rebuilding respecting 'the division of the backyards into linear plots'.¹² One of the lanes uncovered had been resurfaced by flagstones during the seventeenth century.¹³ A number of Cork's old lanes still survive to the present day. Some of them are marked with name plaques on the footpaths along North Main Street – one of the legacy initiatives of the Cork Historic Centre Action Plan in the 1990s.¹⁴

The main entrances into the walled town were through South Gate Bridge and North Gate Bridge, both of which are depicted on the map as timber structures flanked by gatehouses. Ships arriving into the port of Cork were able to dock inside the safety of the central waterway within the walls, along a line immediately south of the present-day Castle Street, protected by a gateway between King's Castle to the south and Queen's Castle to the north (Plate 2). It is evident that it was not possible for ships to travel upstream to the grist mill that was used for grinding cereal grains on the western end of town, as there was a bridge connecting the northern and southern halves of the main street. Other prominent features of the town centre were a market cross, indicating that this was the central hub of trade and commerce and Roche's Castle lying south-east of this cross. Christ Church (or Holy Trinity) in the south-east quarter is depicted as a large church.¹⁵ Built in the 1180s, it was replaced in c.1726 by a neoclassical church designed by the architect John Coltsman, and now houses the Triskel Christchurch arts centre. 16 A Hodder family vault can still be found in the south aisle of the crypt beneath this building. It contains the remains of brothers John and William, who served as the first two Protestant mayors of Cork in 1656 and 1657. The original St Peter's church in the north-west quarter was demolished in 1782, replaced by a newer structure in 1788. It now operates as an arts and heritage visitor centre called St Peter's Cork.¹⁷ Skiddy's Castle stood a short distance north of St Peter's church. Built in the middle of the fifteenth century as the residence of John Skiddy, the structure had a timber raft foundation supported by vertical stakes. In 1608 the tower house had an associated messuage called 'Skiddies [sic] land'. 18 Many of the buildings that stood back from the main street in the c.1601 map were aligned in a north-south direction. Other recognisable features on the map include a fort in the partially reclaimed East Marsh, a small building on one of the western marshes, domestic dwellings in the suburbs, St Fin Barre's Cathedral, the Franciscan friary, the Augustinian abbey (Red Abbey) and the Dominican priory.

The defensive walls that surrounded the town measured over 20ft tall and about 8ft wide, resting on a stepped plinth up to 15ft wide. Other towns of Ireland had thinner walls, as their corporations lacked the financial resources to build more durable structures. Limerick's walls, for example, were 7ft thick, Kilkenny's were 4½ft thick, Athlone's were 3ft thick, while the walls at both Athenry and Youghal were only 2ft thick in places. Cork's walls were topped by battlements and also featured a stepped platform near the top for sentries, called a wall walk. Typically, the inner face of the walls was vertical and the



3 – The north-east bastion of Elizabeth Fort (all photos by the author)

opposite

4 – Plan of Cork, 1602 entitled 'A Description of the Cittie of Cork, with the Places Adjacent Thereto' (courtesy Board of Trinity College Dublin)



outer face was battered. Whilst the walls were first erected in the thirteenth century (typically with limestone blocks and traces of sandstone at the faces, and a rubble core kept together with lime and sand mortar), repairs and rebuilding works were carried out in a number of locations during the seventeenth century. The total number of towers depicted along the course of the walls in the c.1601 map is eighteen. This is two less than the number depicted in the *Pacata Hibernia* map of c.1587, but one more than the number depicted in the earliest map dating to 1545. Another new feature in the c.1601 map is Elizabeth Fort (Plate 2), which was located on a rise in the south suburbs. It was replaced with a more robust star-shaped structure with salient bastions in 1626 (Plate 3), which required largescale quarrying for the sourcing of building materials and the provision of a secure foundation. In addition to the richness of cartographic detail provided for the town centre and suburbs, one of the most notable features of the c.1601 map is the evidence it furnishes for the beginnings of the town's eastward expansion onto the East Marsh. A walkabout is shown around the perimeter of this marsh, whose south-western corner is connected to the walled area by a wooden bridge.

Another map of early modern Cork dates from 1602 and is entitled 'A description of the Cittie of Cork, with the places adjacent thereto' (Plate 4).²² Once again, it is orient-ated with west on the top. It bears some resemblance to the c.1601 map, with the roofs of domestic buildings in the walled town coloured in red, but not in orange. A noticeable difference, however, is the 1602 map's depiction of houses in the suburbs, which are illustrated with green-coloured roofs. This map also furnishes a far more accurate plan of the layout of the walkabout surrounding the East Marsh. Geographically, it

can be deduced that its edges followed a line running along present-day Cornmarket Street to the west, Paul Street to the south, Emmet Place to the east (the eastern side of which appears as Lavitt's Quay on Smith's 1750 map), and Lavitt's Quay to the north (which appears as Ferry Quay on Carty's 1726 map). From an administrative perspective, another milestone in Cork's spatial expansion in the first decade of the seventeenth century was the granting of a charter by King James I in 1608. This officially extended the geographical limits of municipal jurisdiction from within the town walls to roughly three miles beyond them. This area became known as the County of the City of Cork and was administered by two sheriffs elected by the Corporation.²³ Whilst the political situation at the time still necessitated an urban core defined by high protective walls, it seems that those in power were well aware of the development potential of the town's immediate hinterland. The ample supply of low-lying marshy land, situated in close proximity to navigable water channels, ultimately became the preferred location for the creation of a brand new business district fit for a maritime centre of growing international prominence. The solid ground on the hills overlooking the town centre would prove to be a popular location for suburban housing.

A third map dating from the early seventeenth century is John Speed's well-known map of the town of Cork in 1610.24 This largely confirms the plan of the town shown in the c.1601 and 1602 maps. Even though the municipal area had been enlarged in 1608, the continuing need for defensive walls is evident from entries in the Council Book, which reveal that they needed constant maintenance and repair.²⁵ Beyond the walls, Cork's security also relied upon coastal fortifications designed to protect against an enemy invasion. One of these can be seen in a map of Cork Harbour dating to 1624, which illustrates the presence of a fortification called King John's Fort.²⁶ The presence of strong coastal fortifications proved to be of great benefit to those engaged in trying to grow trade and commerce in the port. The recovery and expansion of Ireland's economy during the 1610s, 1620s and 1630s resulted in a substantial upturn in the trading of marketable resources.²⁷ This brought substantial benefits to its coastal towns, including Cork, which grew in size and shed its late medieval character. This can be seen from the marked increase in the number of streets, lanes and buildings between the early 1600s and early 1640s. The evidence for this can be found by comparing the 1602 map with information available for the built environment in 1641, which is contained in the Survey and Valuation of c.1663-64.28 Evidently, the total number of streets and lanes in Cork's walled area and suburbs more than doubled from about 44 in 1602 (29 in the walled area and 15 in the suburbs) to 93 by 1641 (69 in the walled area and 24 in the suburbs), while there was close to a threefold population increase from c.2,906 in 1602 to c.8,262 in 1641.²⁹

Ultimately, the landscapes of Cork's hinterland witnessed considerable change in the early decades of the seventeenth century, as the lands of the Gaelic Irish were sold or mortgaged to New English settlers or to the Old English merchant families of Cork and other towns in Munster.³⁰ Whilst the displacement of native populations from their lands resulted in them having to move to 'previously less-inhabited landscapes' like uplands, bogs and woods, the towns of provinces like Munster also witnessed a 'swelling of the ... suburban footprint'.³¹ This uprooting of impoverished and/or dispossessed rural people from the countryside to new locations surrounding the walled towns was no doubt one of

the factors that fuelled the above-mentioned expansion in Cork's population. Other factors included the arrival of immigrants from England in response to the trade boom. As the traditional 'gift-exchange economy' of bartering dwindled, 'there was a shift ... from a concern with the use value of products to the exchange value of goods'.³² The port of Cork benefited considerably from the new economy that emerged in its hinterland. Throughout the countryside, considerable efforts were made by the Council of Munster to commercialise the economy. During the years 1610 to 1630, there was a feverish upsurge in the establishment of markets and fairs for the commercial trading of fresh products and livestock. Such developments provided an important stimulus for a growing export trade in agricultural commodities.³³

WORLDS TURNED UPSIDE DOWN: EVIDENCE FROM THE MID-SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY 'DOCUMENTS OF CONQUEST'34

HE IRISH CONFEDERATE WARS OF 1641-53 HAD A DEVASTATING IMPACT ON THE ISLAND of Ireland, including its towns and cities. The repercussions of the anti-Catholic hysteria that followed in the wake of the failed 1641 Rebellion by the Gaelic Irish were felt in Cork in July 1644, when its Catholic inhabitants were expelled from the walled city. The city was placed under military rule for the next twelve years. Following the execution of King Charles I, Ireland was invaded in September 1649 by the New Model Army of the Commonwealth of England. Under the leadership of Oliver Cromwell, it was intent on eliminating support for the royalist cause, confiscating land from anybody involved in the 1641 Rebellion, and redistributing it to the 'adventurers' who had financed the parliament's cause during the English Civil War.³⁵ The lasting impact of the Cromwellian conquest of 1649-53 was to secure, in Ireland's rural and urban areas, the ascendancy and interests of the New English Protestant population, which had been gradually expanding since the late sixteenth century.³⁶ Further expulsions of Catholics from the walled city of Cork occurred in 1649, 1651 and 1656. Around this time period, there was an influx of New English Protestant settlers and soldiers into the city.³⁷

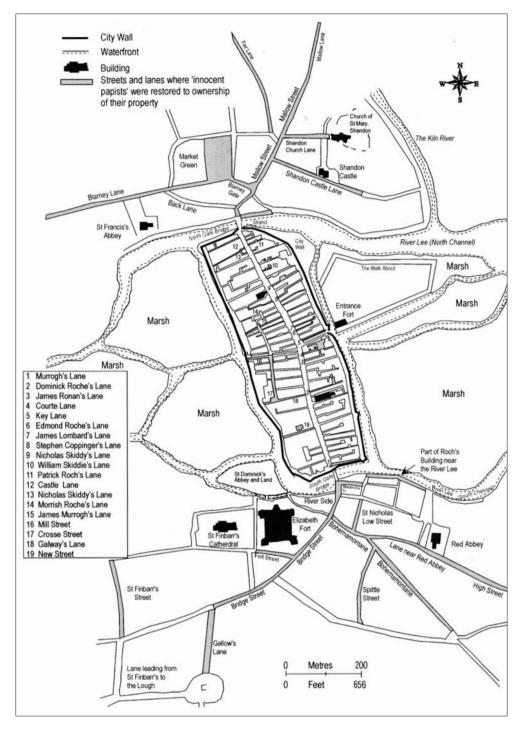
An insight into the territorial impact of the expulsions of Cork's Catholic inhabitants is provided by the so-called 1659 Census. As this source only lists adult males over the age of fifteen who were liable to pay a poll-tax, a multiplier of three has to be applied to all of the data (except for the number of soldiers) when calculating Cork city's population. Based on this exercise, it can be estimated that the total population of the walled city in 1659 stood at c.3,605 and that the combined total for the walled city and suburbs was c.7,547. In terms of ethnic composition, the New English Protestant settlers in the walled city – whose number amounted to c.2,356 – outnumbered the Catholic Old English (who are listed in the source under 'Irish') and Gaelic Irish (also listed under 'Irish') by nearly two to one. In spite of the various expulsions, there was still a total of c.1,249 Old English and Gaelic Irish Catholics living in the walled city of Cork in 1659. That one-third of the walled city's population was still Old English and Gaelic Irish in 1659 may be explained by the fact that as a bureaucratic undertaking, 'the eviction of all Catholics [from the Irish towns] proved impossible', even though the Cromwellians were

more successful in excluding them from municipal office and trade.⁴⁰ Humanitarian reasons may also have been a factor at play as well. Another finding that emerges from the 1659 Census is that the total population of the suburbs was slightly larger than that of the walled city. In terms of ethnicity, the suburban Old English and Gaelic Irish population was nearly triple that of the New English.

The restoration of the monarchy occurred in 1660 when Charles II became King of England, Scotland and Ireland. The return of royal authority in Ireland saw no let-up in the surveying of Ireland's assets. One such example is the Survey and Valuation of properties in the walled city and suburbs of Cork, dating to c.1663-64.41 Although this source furnishes information for 68 lanes in the walled city and 24 streets and lanes in the north and south suburbs, it has been estimated that only about half of Cork's properties are actually listed in the final document. Nonetheless, it is still possible to produce a detailed cross-sectional reconstruction of Cork's urban historical geographies from the evidence contained in this source, which was carried out in order to satisfy the salary arrears of the so-called 'Forty-Nine Officers' who had served in Charles I's army in the years leading up to 1649.42 The Survey and Valuation lists the names of those who owned the properties in 1641 (mainly Catholic Old English and Gaelic Irish) and those who possessed them in c.1663-64 (mainly New English Protestants). Out of the 92 streets and lanes surveyed in the city and suburbs in c.1663-64, 'innocent' Catholics (described as 'Papists') were restored to their property in 39 streets and lanes – 20 in the suburbs and 19 in the walled city (Plate 5).⁴³ The most striking geographical pattern that emerges from this information is that in both the north and south suburbs, virtually every street (20 out of 24) contained one or more 'innocent' Catholic that had been restored to their property, while in contrast, less than a third of the 68 lanes in the walled city contained at least one. The Survey and Valuation points to a diverse spatial distribution of wealth across the walled city and suburbs.⁴⁴ In total, the eight years purchase valuation of all the properties surveyed in the walled city and suburbs amounted to £28,946 19s 4d.

The *Survey and Valuation* also contains a plethora of information about Cork's built environment in *c*.1663-64.⁴⁵ This data is contained in the second to fifth columns of the source. The caption for the second column is 'Denominations', which provides detailed descriptions of the properties that were surveyed, including different types of buildings (domestic and non-domestic) and plots of land. The third and fourth columns give the 'Length' and 'Breadth' in feet for each building or plot of land, while the fifth column gives the name of the 'Street or Lane' on which they were located. In the walled city, a total of 75 domestic buildings were surveyed in the North-East Quarter, followed in turn by the North-West Quarter with 56, the South-East Quarter with 42, and the South-West Quarter with 47. Overall, 220 domestic buildings were surveyed in the walled city, compared to 358 in the suburbs – 167 in the north suburbs and 191 in the south suburbs. The total number of domestic buildings surveyed in the walled city and suburbs was 578. In the *Survey and Valuation*, a total of 55 buildings are also listed as being in a ruinous state – 37 in the walled city and 18 in the suburbs.

As mentioned above, the *Survey and Valuation* lists a wide array of domestic and non-domestic buildings. The rectangular houses that fronted the main street at right angles were the most expensive, while those fronting onto the lanes running off the main street



5 – Streets and lanes where Catholic proprietors were restored to the ownership of their property by decrees of innocence passed under the Act of Settlement (courtesy Geographical Society of Ireland)

were generally much cheaper. Throughout the walled city and suburbs, there was a considerable amount of diversity in the types of buildings surveyed. In most cases, domestic dwellings in the walled city had an adjoining garret, were normally two or three storeys high, tended to have dimensions of about 50ft x 25ft, and had stone walls with slated roofs. By contrast, most domestic dwellings in the suburbs had thatched roofs. They generally consisted of either one-storey cabins (presumably with mud walls), with dimensions of about 30ft x 12ft, or one-storey dwelling houses (presumably with stone walls). Not one single thatched dwelling house was surveyed in the walled city (as they had been banned by the Corporation after a devastating fire ravaged the area inside the walls in 1622). By contrast, 84 thatched dwelling houses, two one-and-a-half-storey thatched dwelling houses, and one two-storey thatched dwelling house were surveyed in the suburbs. Another contrast can be seen with respect to cabins. Only two were surveyed in the entire walled city, compared to 189 of them in the suburbs. On the other hand, the number of three-storey slated dwelling houses was far greater in the walled city than it was in the suburbs. A further difference arises with respect to back dwelling houses: 65 of them were surveyed in the walled city, as opposed to only nine in the suburbs. Large variances are also evident in the number of upper rooms or lofts that were surveyed. A total of 152 garrets were surveyed in the walled city while only 59 were surveyed in the suburbs.

Across the walled city and suburbs, a variety of non-domestic buildings are listed in the *Survey and Valuation*, including 46 back houses, 14 outhouses, two warehouses, four barns and 28 stables (for animals like horses); 53 structures described as sheds, linnys (for farm storage) and hovels (possibly cattle shelters) are also listed. Commercial activity is indicated by the presence of two shops surveyed in the North-West Quarter of the walled city and two in the north suburbs. A number of taverns are listed as well, with names such as The Sign of the Red Lion, King's Head, Three Tuns, George, Golden Anchor, White Horse, Royal Oak, Angell, Crowne, Star, Swan, Red Anchor and Three Mariners. The total number of industrial buildings surveyed in the walled city and suburbs was 46-32 in the walled city and 14 in the suburbs. Among these were 22 malting houses (for making whiskey or beer), 46 12 kill houses (ten of which were located within the walled city), two brewhouses, two smith's forges, seven grist mills and one fulling mill (for woollen cloth-making). With the exception of the mills and forges, most of the industrial buildings were geographically located within the confines of the walled area.

Eight fishing weirs are also listed in the *Survey and Valuation*, along with 596 different areas of land – 242 in the walled city and 354 in the suburbs. The most common type of land was gardens: 82 of them were surveyed in the walled area as opposed to 211 in the more spacious suburbs. Plots known as back sides, which were located to the rear of buildings, were more common in the walled city than gardens. A total of 109 of them were surveyed there, as opposed to 88 in the suburbs. Other open areas that were surveyed included 12 courts (eight in the walled city and four in the suburbs), 17 yards (eleven in the walled city and six in the suburbs), four courtyards (all of which were located in the North-West Quarter of the walled city), and three closes (all of which were located in the suburbs). Altogether, the building typologies that emerge from the Survey and Valuation present a rare insight into the salient architectural features and historical geographies of the early modern city. The evidence contained in this source highlights

the broad range of structures that were erected by the citizens over space and through time, so as to serve Cork's commercial, defensive, industrial, recreational, religious, and residential needs.

A PERIOD OF RENAISSANCE: THE FORGING OF AN ATLANTIC PORT CITY, 1660-1715

English Protestants asserted their political hegemony and enjoyed the fruits of a period of economic renaissance from the 1660s onwards. During this period, the physical size and population of Cork increased and it also garnered a reputation as an Atlantic port city of international significance. In addition to consolidating its links with English and French ports, new wealth was generated from exports of meat and butter provisions to the British colonies in the West Indies. Whilst there was an increased birth rate amongst the New English settlers, the city also experienced an influx of Huguenots, Quakers, Baptists and Presbyterians. When he visited Cork city in 1685, Sir Richard Cox furnished an estimate of its population, stating 'The suburbs are grown twice as big as the citty, and altogether do containe 20,000 souls.'⁴⁷

Further political change occurred in Cork in the mid to late 1680s when Catholics temporarily regained control of the Corporation. However, political power in the city reverted back to Protestant control following a siege by Williamite forces, led by the Duke of Marlborough, in September 1690. Despite the political disturbances, Cork and its hinterland remained resilient, and county Cork was one of only six Irish counties to register an increase in hearth tax revenue (and logically in population) between 1685 and 1702.48 Cork city's population rose further to around 24,275 by 1700,49 and this increasefrom around 7,547 in 1659 represents a growth rate of about five per cent per annum – a figure much higher than English cities like London. The landscape transformations that accompanied the expansion in Cork's population can be seen from three late seventeenthcentury maps of the Atlantic port city. The first of these, which dates to 1685, is a pen and water-coloured map that appears in military engineer Thomas Phillips' Military Survey of Ireland.⁵⁰ A virtually identical map of the city, dating to 1690 and orientated with west on the top, was first published in George Story's A Continuation of the Impartial History of the Wars of Ireland (and later reprinted in Francis Tuckey's The County and City of Cork Remembrancer) (Plate 6).51 Finally, a coloured map of the city by the Frenchman Goubet Fecit also exists, dating to c.1690-95.52

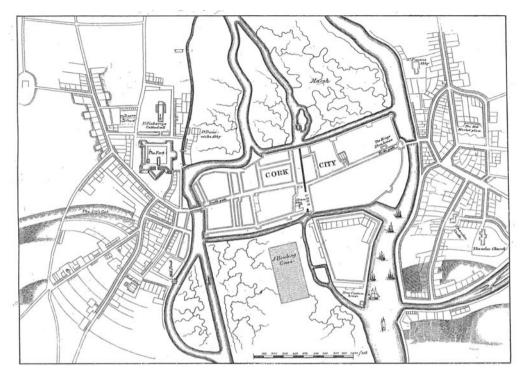
For the purpose of this article, Story's map will be considered. Compared to the maps of c.1601 (Plate 2), 1602 (Plate 4) and 1610, one of the main changes evident in Story's map of 1690 is the striking growth of the north and south suburbs, whose hilly terrain is depicted in shaded relief, with the light appearing to emanate from the northwest. In contrast to the c.1601 map, the number of towers in the 1690 map has fallen by seven to eleven. Lanes can still be seen extending at right angles from the main street as far as the city walls, but is clear that most have been deliberately omitted. North Gate and South Gate are both labelled on the 1690 map, as is the King's Storehouse (formerly

Skiddy's Castle). St Francis' Abbey, which is depicted on the north bank of the River Lee, formed part of the estate of the Earl of Orrery. Another perceptible difference in the 1690 map is the downstream expansion of the port east of the walled city. The eastern side of the central waterway inside the walled area is shown to have been either partly filled in and/or arched over, while the North Channel of the River Lee and a new stretch of quayside on its southern bank are depicted as the principal zone of maritime activity. Seven sailing ships are depicted in the North Channel, while the location of the New Custom House (on the site of the present-day Crawford Art Gallery) is shown near the eastern end of the East Marsh. In contrast to the c.1601 and 1602 maps, this marsh is shown to have been fully reclaimed.

Another conspicuous feature on the 1690 map is the presence of a substantial leisure attraction on the Great Marsh (known later as Dunscombe's Marsh). The feature, which is situated immediately south of the river channel that is now occupied by St Patrick's Street, is named on the map as the Bowling Green. Although little is known about this spot, which would have offered Cork's citizens a welcome escape from the claustrophobic spaces of the walled area, an entry in the Council Book from 1625 indicates that a 'Bowling Alley' had been left to the use of the Corporation by covenant from Michael Gallwey.⁵⁴ Such a facility was also present in the nearby town of Bandon.⁵⁵ thus indicating the growing popularity of this sport in the early modern period. The increased availability of loans for capital development was a fundamental factor in fuelling Cork's expansion onto the surrounding marshes, with investments in their reclamation absorbing several generations of speculative merchant capital. This strategic development land was held by the Corporation and let in long leases to its members.⁵⁶ The port city's heightened integration into the early modern capitalist world system is reflected in the foundation of Hoare's Bank around 1675 by two wine merchants, Edward and Joseph Hoare. Located on Hoare's Lane, this was the first banking institution in the city. It was known in later years as Pike's Bank.57

The records that exist for the 1690s give an insight into the public works schemes that were undertaken by the restored Protestant corporation in order to rectify the 'great ruin and devastations' 58 that had been caused by the siege in 1690. On 14th April 1691 a certain Mr Perry was ordered to 'view and search the City Court-house, where it is deficient, and have it speedily mended'. The following September, the Corporation ordered 'that the Gallery for the Mayor and Aldermen in Christ Church be rebuilt at the proper cost'. This was financed out of the pockets of all the aldermen and burgesses, who each had to pay 20s and 13s 4d respectively. On 5th January 1692 the Corporation ordered 'that the holes in the roof of the Walke be amended'. 90 On the same day, the matter of raising revenue was discussed. It was decided that 'any part of the Corporation Estate that shall be leased or set shall be publickly set to cant in the Tholsel for the fairest bidder'. In March 1693, Battle of the Boyne veteran Sir John Hanmer was given the task of 'surveying and repairing the works at Cork', while the following September, the Corporation made preparations for a gallery, financed by the aldermen and burgesses, to be built in St Mary's Church, Shandon.

A new scheme of public works was also initiated in the 1690s, aimed at enhancing the infrastructure needed for conducting trade and commerce. Of profound significance



6 – George Story's map of Cork City, 1690 in Francis H. Tuckey, The County and City of Cork Remembrancer; Or Annals of the County and City of Cork (Cork, 1837, facing 114)

to the transformation of the city's landscape was the Corporation's successful petition to the Lord Lieutenant in 1692 'for liberty to open gates in the [city] walls, and to discontinue their maintenance, inasmuch as the tide ebbed and flowed around them, and the ground beyond them [in the marshes] might be useful'.63 Encroachments upon the city walls also began to be permitted by the Corporation. On 25th July 1692 it gave permission to Francis Hodder to 'build a ... wall to his garden, on the town walls'. The south-eastern section of the walls, which had been breached during the Williamite siege, was of particular concern to the Corporation. As it was in danger of falling down, the Corporation entrusted a certain Mr French, on 10th September 1694, with the task of 'pulling the same [part of the walls] down', and resolved to pay him out of the city's revenue.⁶⁴ A large section of the walls facing the East Marsh was demolished in 1706, while King's Castle was demolished two years afterwards and replaced with new houses.⁶⁵ A survey carried out on 8th August 1733 by Mr Jehosaphat Huleatt, the Surveyor of Public Works in the city, highlights that they had either been integrated into privately owned properties or demolished to pavement level.66 Two sections uncovered by archaeological excavations are still visible today, at the Grand Parade entrance to Bishop Lucey Park (Plate 7) and on the eastern side of the Kyrl's Quay entrance to the North Main Street car park.

To enhance connectivity by foot across the city's water channels and to facilitate the port's downstream expansion, new bridges and quays were constructed and marsh reclamation works gathered pace. On 20th October 1693 Alderman Newenham was



7 – Excavated lower section of city walls at Bishop Lucey Park, Grand Parade, Cork (incorporating seventeenth-century repairs)

opposite, 8 — The Exchange,
Castle Street, Cork
engraving from Charles Smith,
THE ANCIENT AND PRESENT STATE
OF THE COUNTY AND CITY OF CORK,
NEW EDITION 1815
(courtesy Cork City & County Archives)

granted liberty to build a footbridge 'from his back-house over the river to the fishambles', and on 19th September 1694 it was resolved that the inhabitants of 'the East Marsh of this City' were to be granted liberty to finance their own construction of 'a bridge from said Marsh over to the Key called Robert's Key, or otherwise known by the name of Kearle's Key'. In granting permission, the Corporation ordered 'that there be a drawbridge made to let boats and ships pass in and out'. In June 1695 the Corporation ordered that a yearly rent of 15s be paid 'for the strip of marsh southward of the late cut channel lately in the tenancy of Mr Nich Green'. On 18th January 1698 Captain Dunscombe was granted liberty to erect 'a stone bridge from Tuckey's Quay (the stretch of present-day Grand Parade running from the junctions with St Patrick's Street and Oliver Plunkett Street) onto the Great Marsh, 'making the arch or arches so high and broad that any lighter may pass through laden at a spring tide'. Prior to building the structure, he was required to make 'a draw-bridge sixteen foot in the clear in the passage to the said marsh from the middle quay, so that ships at high water may pass through'. The construction of Tuckey's Bridge was completed in 1699. On 7th September of the same year, Alderman Tuckey also obtained permission 'to build houses on Ormond Quay', but was required to leave '20 feet clear in breadth for a quay'.67

To improve the quality of urban living conditions, the Corporation also took an interest in environmental matters. In the late 1690s, a new team of cleaners was appointed to keep the streets free of refuse, and penalties were imposed on those found guilty of littering. On 3rd March 1696 the Corporation attempted to 'justify the Mayor in committing the labourer lately for throwing dung on the quay without the East gate, against a presentment of the Grand Jury, October, 1696, he refusing to pay 5 pounds according to said presentment'. A water-works scheme commenced on 30th July 1697 when the Corporation made an agreement with Edward Richardson to bring 'fresh water in pipes to every house in this City'. During the three years he was given to implement the scheme, he was granted permission to break up the pavement, but was also obliged to mend it once his work was complete. Darby Galey was appointed as the town scavenger on 13th December 1697. He was entrusted with the task of carrying away the rubbish in the streets and lanes in his cart on the Monday and Thursday of every week. His yearly salary was £10.68 In an effort to boost commercial activity, the Corporation also invested in new building projects within the walled area. In April 1693 it set about raising £200 for the construction of a new butchers' shambles (or slaughter house) on the southern side of the old central waterway, part of which was to be financed from revenue generated by admitting freemen.⁶⁹ The Flesh Shambles, which sold all kinds of butchers' meat, opened later in the year at a cost of £481 5s.⁷⁰ Although it was probably exaggerated, an intriguing insight into Cork's physical expansion in the late seventeenth century is provided by the Earl of Orrery, who claimed that £60,000 had been spent on new public buildings in the city.⁷¹

The political stability that followed the Williamite Wars enhanced the opportunities for more continuous commercial growth in Cork in the closing years of the seventeenth century and early decades of the eighteenth century. An English visitor who visited the city in 1697 was impressed by what he saw, noting that the Atlantic port city drove 'a very great trade' in provisions to the West Indies, 'chiefly by Bristol men who flock hither to load, about September and October, for Jamaica, Barbados, Antigua and the other islands with beef, pork, butter, candles, etc'.72 The extent of this trade is also attested to by a reference to ten ships docked at the city quays in 1703, carrying over 2,220 men, 'all laden with provisions and ready to sayle' to the West Indies.73 As Cork's commercial development continued apace, a two-storey civic building known as The Exchange (Plate 8) was built by the corporation in 1708, on a site donated by Thomas Tuckey. Located at the junction of Castle Street and Main Street, where Roche's Castle once stood, this multifunctional structure provided an urbane setting for the conduct of business transactions and for fulfilling the functions of municipal local government. The ground floor provided a space for the conduct of business transactions, while the upper floor was used as the Council Chamber. The Exchange also functioned as an information point for legal and administrative matters, offering facilities for the display of proclamations and orders by the Corporation. From an architectural perspective, its significance arises from the fact that it ushered Palladian classicism into the heart of the city centre. Its two floors employed the usage of the classical orders, with Tuscan piers for the ground-floor loggia





9 – South Gate Bridge opposite

10 – Nathaniel Grogan, NORTH GATE BRIDGE, c.1794 (courtesy Crawford Art Gallery)

and engaged pilasters for the upper floor. The latter was crowned by a decorative cornice and parapet, topped by a cupola clock tower and dragon weather vane. The Exchange survived intact until 1837.⁷⁴

The deteriorating condition of the wooden North and South Gate bridges, which had been damaged by floods in the 1630s and 1679, was a major cause for concern in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Repairs were carried out on North Gate Bridge by the corporation in 1697.75 A total sum of £4 17s 6d was paid for carrying out further repairs to North and South Gate bridges in October 1710. Both bridges were replaced in 1713 by two humpback stone structures designed by John Coltsman. The triplearch South Gate Bridge, which was widened eastwards in the early 1820s, still survives to this day (Plate 9). On the other hand, the five-arch North Gate Bridge was replaced with a cast-iron structure in 1864 and the concrete Griffith Bridge in 1961. An original sketch of North Gate Bridge, drawn by artist Nathaniel Grogan in the late eighteenth century, shows it overlooked by the four-storey North Gate House (Plate 10). This building, which housed a prison on its upper floors, was first constructed around 1715. It featured a central arched passageway for pedestrians and horse-drawn carriages entering and leaving the site of the old walled area. Whilst most of North Gate House was demolished shortly after another sketch of it was drawn by Henry Hill in 1824, part of its back wall was still standing in the late 1930s. 76 As can be seen from Grogan's sketch, those making their way southwards through the central archway of North Gate House would have had excellent sightlines to The Exchange's clock tower.

CONCLUSION: A CITY ON THE CUSP OF GEORGIAN-ERA OVERHAULS

STANDARD WAY OF ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT SETTLEMENTS IS TO BEGIN BY ASKING how large they are. This allows one to go on to compare their magnitudes and to relate them to other findings. The also has the advantage of being 'applicable to all cultural situations'. While the c.2,906 recorded for Cork's population in 1602 made it a relatively small settlement by European standards, its increase by over eightfold to c.24,275 in 1700 enabled it to assume a higher rank in the European urban hierarchy. The city's population at the outset of the eighteenth century put it on an equal or greater footing than a number of other prominent cities in Europe at this time. By 1700 Cork's population

was nearly five times larger than the figure for Liverpool and around three times larger than the figures for Leeds and Boston.⁷⁹ Dublin, however, was Ireland's fastest-growing city in this 'age of change', which was marked by substantial commercial diversification.⁸⁰ Its population grew by nearly twelve-and-a-half times, from about 5,000 in 1600 to nearly 62,000 by 1706.⁸¹ Even though it could not keep pace with the more rapid growth of Ireland's capital city, Cork had still risen to prominence as the premier city of the province of Munster by the end of the seventeenth century, while also enhancing its status as an Atlantic port of international standing.

Fuelled by conspicuous spurts of growth in its population and economy, the emergence of Cork city in the seventeenth century was underpinned by significant infrastructural developments and physical changes. One of the most striking spatial changes was the expansion of housing onto the unoccupied land plots that adjoined the laneways off Main Street and onto the more spacious suburban hills to the north and south of the walled area. Important too was the development of the East Marsh, which heralded the eastward shift in the core area of shipping activity, downstream from the old central waterway. This left an indelible mark on the long-term evolution of Cork's urban form, as did the sundry public works aimed at boosting the port city's status. However, an untoward consequence of building on marshy foundations with inadequate building supplies and/or imperfect construction techniques is that little remains of medieval and early modern Cork's architecture above the present-day pavement level. The fourteenth-century bell tower of Red Abbey and early seventeenth-century Elizabeth Fort are the notable exceptions. Whilst other bits of tangible heritage remain elsewhere – such as individual pieces of cut stone, carvings and possible fragments of walls behind the façades of some of the nineteenth-century buildings that remain in areas like North Main Street - no complete building from the seventeenth century or earlier has survived in one piece.82



In the long-run, it was not until the Georgian era that increased levels of wealth were made manifest in more dramatic overhauls to Cork's skyline. A key moment in the rejuvenation of the early modern cityscape was the completion in 1724 of a brand new Custom House at the former King's Dock or Quay (now the western side of Emmet Place), with a first-floor piano nobile from the Renaissance tradition. The need to cater for Protestant worship was reflected in a spate of eighteenth-century church-building under the direction of Peter Browne, Bishop of Cork and Ross. These included St Anne's, Shandon (1722) and St Paul's, Paul Street (1723), along with substantial rebuilds of Christ Church, South Main Street (1726) and St Fin Barre's Cathedral (1735). Sustained success during the 'Golden Age' of eighteenth-century commercial expansion ushered in other profound changes to the Atlantic port city's appearance, including new vistas, town houses made from small-sized and red-coloured Dutch bricks (which first arrived in the port as ballast), hillside mansions and greater levels of architectural sophistication. The local red sandstone still prevailed as a popular construction material, but its softness saw most window and door surrounds made from cut limestone or brick. Population-growth continued apace during the Georgian era, rising to around 41,000 by the middle of the eighteenth century and to more than 57,000 by 1796. The layout of the city centre also changed considerably, with the core business district relocating east of the old walled area. This development was enabled by the filling in and culverting of various water channels and the reclamation of Dunscombe's Marsh, Reap Marsh and Dunbar's Marsh.83

ENDNOTES

The following abbreviations are used:

CBCCC R. Caulfield

R. Caulfield (ed.), The Council Book of the Corporation of the City of Cork, from 1609 to 1643, and from 1690 to 1800. Edited from the original, with annals and appendices compiled from public and private sources (Guilford, 1876)

JCHAS Journal of the Cork Historical & Archaeological Society

SCA Special Collections and Archives, Boole Library, University College

Cork

NIAH, Cork Dept of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht/National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, Introduction to the Architectural Heritage of

Cork City (Dublin, 2012)

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2005)

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- This is the term used by John Bradley, 'Planned Anglo-Norman Towns in Ireland', in Howard B. Clarke and Anngret Simms (eds), The Comparative History of Urban Origins in Non-Roman Europe: Ireland, Wales, Denmark, Germany, Poland and Russia from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries, BAR International Series 255 (Oxford, 1985) 436.
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- Bradley, 'Planned Anglo-Norman Towns in Ireland', 439.
- Maurice F. Hurley, 'Excavations in Cork City: Kyrl's Quay/North Main Street and at Grand Parade (Part 1)', JCHAS, 2nd series, 100, 1995, 47-48.
- 13 ibid., 54.
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- John Bradley and Andrew Halpin, 'The Topographical Development of Scandinavian and Anglo-Norman Cork', in Patrick O'Flanagan and Cornelius G. Buttimer (eds), Cork, History and Society: interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county (Cork, 1993) 15-44: 32.
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- 'Medieval Cork', in Músaem Chorcaí, Cork: Ancient & Historic (rev. ed. Cork, 1985) 4; Colin Rynne, The Archaeology of Cork City from the Earliest Times to Industrialisation (Cork, 1993) 48; Hurley, 'Medieval Cork', 66-67.
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- ²¹ Colin Rynne, 'An Archaeological Survey of Elizabeth Fort, a Seventeenth-Century Artillery Fortification in Cork City', *JCHAS*, 2nd series, no. 109, 2004, 199-200, 202.
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- ²⁵ See, for example, CBCCC, 44-45.
- ²⁶ See British Library, Add MS 24200/14-15, The Haven of Corke, in State of the Fortes of Ireland, 1624.
- ²⁷ Mary Ann Lyons, 'Maritime Relations between Ireland and France, c.1480-c.1630', *Irish Economic and Social History*, no. 27, 2000, 15.
- ²⁸ Robert C. Simington (ed.), The Civil Survey AD 1654-1656, County of Waterford, Vol. VI, With Appendices: Muskerry Barony, Co. Cork, Kilkenny City and Liberties (Part). Also Valuations, c.1663-64, For Waterford and Cork Cities (Dublin, 1942) 397-497.
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- 35 John Morrill, Oliver Cromwell (Oxford, 2007) 59,
- ³⁶ Robin A. Butlin, 'Irish Towns in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in Robin A. Butlin (ed.), *The Development of the Irish Town* (London, 1977) 94.
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- ³⁸ Seamus Pender (ed.), A Census of Ireland, c.1659. With Supplementary Material from the Poll Money Ordinances (1660-1661) (Dublin, 1939) 191-95.
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- ⁴⁰ Toby C. Barnard, Cromwellian Ireland: English government and reform in Ireland 1649-1660 (London, 1975) 52.
- 41 Simington (ed.), The Civil Survey AD 1654-1656, 397-497.
- ⁴² Mark McCarthy, 'Cross-Sectional Reconstructions of Historic Urban Landscapes: an examination of the nature and comprehensiveness of a midseventeenth-century survey and valuation', *Irish Archives: Journal of the Irish Society for Archives*, New Series, VI, no.1, 1999, 9.
- ⁴³ I would like to thank Dr Siubhán Comer for drawing this map, which was first published in McCarthy, 'Turning a World Upside Down', 50, fig.2. An earlier version of this map can be found in McCarthy, 'Historical Geography of Cork's Transformation', 369, fig.7.4.
- ⁴⁴ See McCarthy, 'Historical Geography of Cork's Transformation', 378, fig.7.6, which illustrates the median valuation per street and lane of what

- properties surveyed in c.1663-64 would be worth if sold at eight-years purchase.
- Twelve maps derived from this information can be found in McCarthy, 'Historical Geography of Cork's Transformation', 364-65, 391, 394, 398, 401, 405, 408, 424, 425, 437, 444, figs 7.2, 7.3, 7.7-7.16. The last four of these (namely figs 7.13-7.16) are point symbol maps depicting the types of houses and buildings that were surveyed in the South-East and South-West Quarters of the walled city, the North-East and North-West Quarters of the walled city, the north suburbs and the south suburbs.
- ⁴⁶ One of the maltsters in the city was Richard Terry. According to James F. Fuller, 'Camden Terry', *JCHAS*, 2nd series, IX, no. 57, 1903, 68, he was buried in Christ Church on 26th April 1684.
- ⁴⁷ Robert Day (ed.), 'Regnum Corcagiense; or, A Description of the Kingdom of Cork. With Remarks on the Ancient and Present State Thereof. By Sir Richard Cox, Bart., Lord Chancellor of Ireland', *JCHAS*, 2nd series, VIII, no. 55, 1902, 160.
- ⁴⁸ David Dickson, Cormac Ó Gráda and Stuart Daultrey, 'Hearth Tax, Household Size and Irish Population Change, 1672-1821', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 82, 1982, 160.
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- 53 SCA, Richard Caulfield Papers, MS U83/7, Bishop Downes' Itinerary, dated 1699, copied from an imperfect transcript of the original.
- ⁵⁴ CBCCC, 117.
- 55 SCA, MS U86, The Earl of Cork's 1685 Rental, transcribed from the original found in the Library of Dromana, dated 9th September 1795.

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- ⁵⁸ CBCCC, 222-23.
- ⁵⁹ *ibid.*, 215, 218, 225, 227.
- 60 ibid., 225.
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- 62 CBCCC, 229.
- ⁶³ John G. MacCarthy, *The History of Cork*, 3rd edn. (Cork, 1870; reprint 1974) 39.
- ⁶⁴ CBCCC, 222, 235.
- ⁶⁵ Tuckey, County and City of Cork Remembrancer, 124, 126.
- 66 See M. Holland (ed.), 'Survey of the Town Walls of Cork in 1733', JCHAS, 2nd series, XXIII, no. 116, 1917, 201-05. Also see J.P.D., 'With Pen and Pencil Around Cork', JCHAS, 1st series, II, pt. 1, no. 22, 1893, 221-22, who notes that portions of the city walls could 'still be seen' in the late nineteenth century 'in the rear of the houses along the western side of the Grand Parade and to the west of Hanover street'.
- 67 *CBCCC*, 231, 237, 245, 272, 275.
- 68 *ibid.*, 260, 262, 264-65.
- 69 ibid., 226-27.
- ⁷⁰ C. Smith, The Ancient and Present State of the County and City of Cork. Containing a Natural, Civil, Ecclesiastical, Historical, and Topographical Description thereof..., 2 vols (Cork, 1750; reprint 1893) I, 387.
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- ⁷² Cited in Kenneth W. Nicholls, 'Modern Shape Emerges', *Cork Examiner*, 1st May 1985, 8.
- ⁷³ SCA, Cork Shrievalty Papers, MS U55, Letter from Alderman Edward Hoare to the Hon Edward Southwell Esqr, Principal Secretary of State at the Castle of Dublin, 17th September 1703, in part of the Robert Southwell Archive, Secretary of State for Ireland, 1622-1734.

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- ⁷⁸ Harold Carter, *An Introduction to Urban Historical Geography* (London, 1983) 82.
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