Department of Sociology – Trinity College Dublin

Perceived *Irishness*:

The (re)construction of 'Irish' identity within the continuum of liquid modernity

By

Yaqoub BouAynaya

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Abstract

This research explores perceived *Irishness* and to what extent identity in Ireland is reconstructed within the continuum of an ever changing society. It examines how values associated with identity affect the ways in which individuals participate in their perceived social reality, are perceived by 'others' and are re/presented between the collective local, national, European and global level. Thus, this thesis considers the evolution and maintenance of nationalism and relates this to the development of the postcolonial Irish nation state within the context of European governance and globalization.

The methodology takes a multiphase approach that seeks to explore individuals' perceived sense of identity, either in stability or flux, by exposure to variations of *Irishness* through the viewing of a multimedia presentation. This novel and innovative qualitative design relies on an audio-visual production made from one-to-one interviews with four individuals of differing backgrounds but who are all Irish citizens. By showing it to eight focus groups the ambition is to elicit in participants the deconstruction of 'Irish' national identity. Through focus group discussions on identity, ethnicity and citizenship evidence emerges from the transcribed and thematically analysed conversations.

Consequently, in exploring the processes of socially constructing *Irishness,* this research facilitates insight into the processes which affect an individual's self-understanding and social categorization. Such a reflexive social investigation reveal findings that substantiate an identity theory positing explicit contradictions between individuals' reliance on deep-rooted and inherent notions of *Irishness* in contrast with awareness and a contemporary understanding of identity as being constructed through social experience.

Furthermore, through empirical validation it postulates the socio-psychological process of 'perceived rational pragmatism' as the means by which individuals within *ordo-liberal* liquid modernity perceive of themselves as rational liberated beings. Through reflection, theory synthesis and the embedded agential design, this thesis informs the reconceptualization of contemporary 'Irish' identity. Its admissions seek to expedite an alternative re-imagination of, "what it means to be Irish" so as to better complement the aspirations towards an egalitarian based socio-democracy.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation has not been previously submitted as an exercise for a degree, wholly or partially for any other academic award at this or any other university. This work is entirely my own.

I agree that the Library may lend or copy this dissertation upon request.

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Yaqoub Jemil BouAynaya

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1 Introducing *Irishness*

The aim of this dissertation is to explore individuals' perceived sense of identity, either in stability or flux, by exposure to variations of *Irishness* through the viewing of an innovative reflexive multimedia presentation. It aims to elicit in participants the deconstruction of 'Irish' national identity through focus group discussion. Subsequently, through debate and deliberation with individuals from within Irish society the re-imagination of the process of identification is envisaged.

What it means to be Irish in the late modern, or even postmodern world,[1] is rooted deeply in the realm of people's consciousness, particularly in the perceived ideas, philosophies and notions of Irish peoplehood. This thesis sets out to explore people's propensity to categorize and give subjective meaning to their social realities. It seeks to examine the boundaries of racialized and ethnicized *Irishness*. Such boundaries are considered to be as 'symbolic constructions, forged and reconstituted in a reciprocal process of interaction and reinforced by the *perceptions* of the differences thought to typify' an 'Irish' identity (Tovey *et al.*, 1989: ii). In doing so, the research seeks to illuminate how people seed, cultivate and nurture through conversation their shared sense of *Irishness*. That is to say, in a primarily qualitative, but also innovative manner, it seeks to examine the (re)construction of 'Irish' identity within the continuum of liquid modernity.

By critically evaluating people's responses to discussion on themes relating to individual and collectivized *Irishness*, a further endeavour is to explore re-imaginations of 'Irish' identity in such a way as to produce "positive" social outcomes. One such "positive" impact would be the alleviation of intra-societal conflict. According to Tovey *et al.* (1989: i) problems in the civic domain in Ireland are deemed traceable to the inability of the Irish 'as a people to express a coherent and authentic sense of Irish identity, or a broadly acceptable philosophy of what it means to be Irish in today's world'. By mitigating social conflict amongst an increasingly diverse population residing in Ireland, one overarching consideration is to advocate

[1] For further debate on *Modernity versus Postmodernity* please refer to Habermas and Benhabib's (1981) aforementioned italicized title.

more inclusive understandings of *Irishness*. Thus, a central purpose to this thesis is to recognise harmoniously and assess particularities of *Irishness*, while at the same time exploring and pushing the boundaries in a normative sense, towards answering the question: "who are the 'we' who seek a shared future on the island of Ireland?"

1.1 Exploring 'Irish' identity within the continuum of liquid modernity

The research documented in this thesis espouses an explicit aim of capturing the consciousness of participants' ways of perceiving 'Irish' identity as it is imagined at this early period of the twenty first century. It attempts to address such voids in academic debate within the Irish context. This study explores, as Monahan (2009: 216) states, 'the frailty of concepts such as identity, nationality and history in the light of the problematic and flexible notion of perspective'. Thus, an overarching ambition is to reveal misconceptions of *Irishness* which may motivate ethical self-transformations and positive modes of resistance to an inequitable social order that relies on mythological perceptions. This is because such fallacies perpetuate power inequalities within Irish society and are fundamentally undemocratic. What then emerges is a proposition based on subjectivity which sets about challenging a broader audience and evoking response. The results and findings contribute to the derivation of thoughts and contestations pertinent to matters relating to identity, citizenship and constitutionality, which consecutively can be posed to the wider public and powerbrokers within political spheres.

By exploring 'Irish' identity as expressed by inhabitants within the contemporary twenty-first Century nation state of Ireland, it may lead to the reconceptualization of Irish identity within an era of fluid, or even liquid modernity.[2] Consequently, the central research question being posed explicitly is,

> *To what extent is identity in Ireland (re)constructed within the continuum of liquid modernity?*

Additionally, an interrelated objective is to reveal and evaluate people's collective rationale for perceiving 'Irish' identity and citizenship and to contrast this with

[2] Bauman (2000: 120) defines 'Fluid' modernity as 'the epoch of disengagement, elusive, facile escape and hopeless chase. In "liquid" modernity, it is the most elusive, those free to move without notice, who rule.'

constitutional legislation introduced in 2004 following the Irish Citizenship Referendum. In accordance with the outcome of the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum, [3] changes in the Irish constitutional legislation indisputably created augmented restriction of citizenship for children of "foreigners" while contradictorily maintained the granting of rights to citizenship to children and grandchildren of "Irish" living abroad from within the broader Irish diaspora.[4]

The criteria for membership of the Irish national collective, which are seen to rely on concepts of the nation in racialized terms, are explored and assessed theoretically. Specifically conjectured is whether or not the shift towards *jus sanguinis* citizenship is contrary to the aspirations of a social democratic state but representative of developments of supranational governance. Further to this, is to query whether or not the change in emphasis towards *jus sanguinis* citizenship relies on subject constitution through governmentality founded on anachronistic colonial rationale. That is to say, to some extent this research seeks to investigate theoretically if an emphasis towards bloodline descent citizenship acquisition is dependent on the top-down governance of individuals and if such government control is an antiquated remnant of colonialism.

In the contemporary context colonialism should not be understood in its simplest form, as the territorial extension of a nation's sovereignty, but should be understood as the multifaceted control or governing influence of people. New forms of colonialism are better comprehended as dominance and control of the individual or groups, across a multitude of facets of people's lives as individuals and as socially governed collectives. However, when considered from the perspective of supranational governance it can also be quite easily understood as colonialism, under the pretence of regionalization, without the blatant territorial conquests of previous historical epochs.

Fitting at this point is to advance that this research expresses the normative position of opposing the retreat of that which is progressive. One practical and reflexive way of analysing the regressive/progressive paradigm is through the expansion of the analysis of individuals' conceptions of nationality, identity and belonging. This requires probing into formations of self-identifications so as to make enquiries into concepts of

[3] Henceforth the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum is referred to interchangeably as the 2004 ICR.
[4] For a more detailed Sociological account of the Irish diaspora in the context of globalisation, please refer to Gray (2002) and, for a more Gender Studies orientation, MacPherson and Hickman's (2014) edited book on 'Women and Irish diaspora identities: theories, concepts and new perspectives'.

people's own experience, of individuals' comprehension of the psychological process and ultimately the nature of the self in relation to society (Heald, 1989: 59). An appropriate way to achieve this is through facilitated focus group discussions, which may lead to self-realizations and contribute to an understanding of perceived *Irishness* in contemporary twenty-first century Ireland. To this end, the study seeks to reveal insight into perceived *Irishness* and to compare such findings with the foundational rationale behind the enactment of *jus sanguinis* legislation through the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum. This is explored through the facilitation of group discussions on processes of (re)identifications. By exploring an in-depth understanding of contemporary 'Irish' identity, along with the re-conceptualization of self-identification, the objective is to disclose potential alternative understandings of citizenship and belonging that are more inclusive (Brandi, 2007: 43; Crowley *et al.*, 2006: 22). Details below provide further justification for the argument that such legislative changes can, and should, be interpreted as regressive rather than progressive.

The ambition of the research is not only to highlight disparities that exist between individuals' concepts of identity and socio-theoretical hypotheses. Central to it is the desire to facilitate deliberation which may provide creative insight into envisaging more apt, contemporary notions of *Irishness* and identity. Consequently a final, yet equally apropos objective of this thesis, is to raise issues relating to *Irishness* and 'Irish' identity to the fore in media and public discourse so as to engender such deliberation. It is for this reason that the research incorporates participatory, reflexive and grass-root phases using contemporary technological means of communication. The intention is to promote the adoption, replication and utilization of such research, in addition to the dissemination of findings across wider society.

The methodological approach adds depth through supplementary phases that incorporate discussion, after a period of reflection, on the drafting of more inclusive citizenship policies. One such phase involves relevant stakeholder participation allowing for open debate and negotiation so as to redistribute power more evenly in the decision-making process.[5] Thus, this study reflexively seeks to recognise and positively influence the emergent nature of society through the promotion and

[5] For more on power and participation please refer to work by Gaventa (1980), entitled, 'Power and Powelessness'.

facilitation of inclusive civic engagement, community involvement and intercultural communication. It is not simply an interpretation of experience but it actively attempts to be a catalyst of social enrichment. To an extent this study could be, 'understood as the transformative capacity of human agency' (Moriarty, 2006: 20) through its methodological processes, dissemination capabilities and objectives.[6]

1.2 Imagining *Irishness*

> We have an image of ourselves as a modern, liberal democracy with a commitment to the rule of law and the protection of human rights. To some extent, this image may be justified. But there may also be significant blind spots in our self-appraisal as a society (O'Reilly, 2013: 131).[7]

Developments in print media and capitalism through the industrial revolution assisted the documentation, preservation and dissemination of what would have been more capricious and transient aspects of pre-industrial oral cultures. New, more encoded modes of communication helped the development of the modern nation state. Anderson (1983: 46) refers to such organizational developments of the state as 'imagined communities', which were made imaginable by 'the convergence of capitalism and print technology on the fatal diversity of human language.' Synchronously, 'the rise of the nation state brought about a transformation in the ways that people thought about themselves and about community. It could be said to have brought about a transformation of identity, even bringing into popular vocabulary the notion of "identity" itself' (Billig, 1995: 61).[8] National identity is thus imagined and invented by a group seeking to forge a collective fortitude through commonalities of identification (White, 2008: 87). Continuing along similar lines of thought Gellner (1983: 48*f.*) makes the suggestion that 'nations as a natural, God-given way of classifying men, as an inherent though long-delayed political destiny [were/are] a myth'. Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1992: 17) emphasize, however, that Gellner roots

[6] Such a methodological approach is akin to the concept of Public Sociology, which was re-introduced by Michael Burawoy during his presidential address at the annual American Sociological Association meeting in 2004 (Fatsis, 2014). For further detail on the 2004 presidential address please refer to, 'For Public Sociology' (Burawoy, 2005).

[7] O'Reilly's (2013) remarks are made specifically with regard to a critical piece on the Irish state's asylum process, suggestively entitled, 'Asylum Seekers in out republic: Why have we gone wrong?'

[8] According to Billig (1995) this quote is in reference to Gidden's (1990) work.

nationalism and cultural homogeneity as a necessary functional requirement of modern societies. Nationality as a means of classification fastens the contemporary nation within an illusion that is not only based on an eternal reality but also is seen as trans-historical (Wodak *et al.*, 1999: 1). This fixity, based on a teleological understanding of the nation as an organization of individuals and communities that are homogeneous is, as Monahan (2009: 110) states, 'established in ritual, cultural performance and historiography which can be usefully seized upon and manipulated by benign, but also corrupt, power systems'. When looked at both historically and from the regional, pan-European level, according to Gaine (2008: 35):

> It is clear that countries within Europe have had very different histories with regard to racial and ethnic differences. The colonial past of several countries has, it is argued, infected the rest with assumptions about visible non-European 'others', but many have also struggled to construct an imagined homogeneity despite significant internal diversity… this sublimating of internal diversity was always problematic and temporary, and that it took the arrival of noticeable numbers of 'foreigners' within the European project to highlight the need to protect people – citizens or not – against the threat of being treated differently and worse because of their physical appearance or aspects of their culture.

The basis for an assessment of the criteria for membership of the Irish nation collectivity is seen to rely on concepts of the nation in racialized terms. Similar to most modern nation states, Ireland is defined as a 'racial state' (Goldberg, 2002; Lentin and McVeigh, 2006: 11; Lentin, 2007), where race and state are inseparable and are defined through the racialization of *Irishness* (Lentin and McVeigh, 2006: 11). The state utilizes biopolitical measures that are blatantly racialized to manage, regulate and mainstream immigration with the unquestioning support of broader society and practically all social policy analysts. Thus, 'the politics of immigration control, which only a decade ago appeared to be the preserve of the "loony right", becomes a core principle of the developing racist state (Lentin & McVeigh, 2006; Lentin, 2007: 435). Similarly Billig (1995) in discussion on national identity in the world of nations perceives the evolution of modernity with notions of the sovereign nation state, and its associated vocabulary on identification, as not only being acceptingly adopted but also imposed by colonial powers. 'The new imposed

identities (such as belonging to the United Tribes of New Zealand) were part of a more general outlook on the world. In this sense, nationalism involves a theoretical consciousness.' Billig (1995: 63) continues to describe how Etienne Balibar (1991: 18),

> …has written that there is 'no racism without theory (or theories)'. The racist may hate unthinkingly, yet as Balibar implies, racism distinguishes between 'our race' and 'other races', 'our racial community' and 'theirs'. At the very minimum, the racist shares some common-sense theory of what a 'race' is; why it appears important; how 'races' differ; and why "ours" should remain unmixed. By the same token, there is no nationalism without theory. Nationalism involves assumptions about what a nation is: as such, it is a theory of community, as well as a theory about the world being 'naturally' divided into such communities. The theory does not need to be experienced theoretically. Intellectuals have written theoretical tomes about 'nation'. With the triumph of nationalism, and the establishment of nations across the globe, the theories of nationalism have been transformed into familiar common sense.

Specifically, embedded in this research is also reflection on subject constitution, which is further elaborated in the second chapter. Suffice to say at this point, in summary this thesis queries if subject formation, via methods of governmentality and anachronistic rationale, allows the state and its constituents to conceptualize and reinforce an overly superficial depiction of 'Irish' identity. That is to say, it queries if from the top down, the Irish state perpetuates shallow depictions of *Irishness* so as to maintain a form of governance based on reasoning that is inconsistent with the existential circumstance of contemporary Irish society.

Community can imply a stable local environment of people, not simply merely existing but functioning effectively for mutual benefit. In studies on Community by Thornton (1997: 2), the recognition is that 'community tends to suggest a more permanent population, often aligned to a neighbourhood, of which family is the key constituent part. Kinship would seem to be one of the main building blocks of community.' In contrast, Halberstam (2003: 315), in reference to Jean Luc Nancy's work, maintains that community is now as moribund and redundant as many view the

Christian ritual of communion. Halberstam (2003: 315) adds, further '…quests for community are always nostalgic attempts to return to some fantasized moment of union and unity reveals the conservative stakes in community for all kinds of political projects.' Though Halberstam (2003: 315) emphasizes the urgency for the reconsideration of subcultures, one could also interpret it as pointing towards the necessity to reconsider notions of the singular homogeneous identity and also to the consideration of the existence of multifarious identities that contend with the community and its inevitable pursuit for homogenization. Similarly, the desire for unity and stability of identity amongst a particular community is seen as manipulating both internally but less explicitly, externally so as to obliterate internal heterogeneity, thus notably silencing and subordinating already marginalized people within the status quo (Nichols, 2010: 116). According to Goldberg (2002: 16) the homogeneous nation, 'is to be viewed as heterogeneity in denial, or more deeply yet as the recognition of heterogeneity at once repressed'. Thus its construction creates exclusions, which are masked by the modern racial state's blatant, yet mediocre, attempts to portray images of accommodation of difference through celebrations of multiculturalism or interculturalism (Lentin and McVeigh, 2006: 11). Nonetheless, both rely on acknowledgement of differences in ethnicities and are expectant of 'the exotica of difference' (Hall, 2000a: 152).

A second critique of multiculturalism relates to the notion of dominant universality whereby 'an attempt to create an identity as "human beings" might only be an attempt by the dominant to be universal' (Hall, 1991: 68). *Dominant universality* leads to the assumption that, if identity is ambiguous, there is essentially nothing to bind humans together other than a singular collective humanity. Such a proposition provides justification for the re-conceptualization of contemporary Irish collectiveness. Without such, paradoxically what is suggested is that universalism, which facilitates multiculturalism through postmodernist identity theory, may promote ethnocentric norms, values and interests that are associated with hegemonic power and globalization (Bhabha, 1990a: 208). At the level of the individual, such Universalist rationale '…takes all perspectives into account, the impartial subject need acknowledge no subjects other than itself to whose interests, opinions and desires it should attend' (Young, 1990: 101). Further critical engagement in relation to the contradictions associated with universalist thought and multiculturalism are detailed

in the subsequent chapter under the heading of 2.5 The dilemmas of the post-national nation state.

For all intents and purposes, the state uses notions of diversity, equality and integration to persuade racial and religious minorities to conform, requiring compromise and compliance to gain entry and acceptance into the mythical homogeneous state. This in fact, could be understood as a racist society (Gilroy and Ouseley, 2005). Moriarty (2006: 126) describes how a dialectical constitutive matrix of migration controls and politics of care, '…shape belonging in Ireland, where systems of racialized governance become routinised through euphemisms, myths and stories.'

This research draws on the examination of the modes and mechanisms of the individual in the representation of 'otherness'. It is conjectured that this investigation will elucidate the problematic, trans-historical aspects of identity and difference, which are presumed to account for the dominant configuration of knowledge/power but similarly create space for resistance and counter-hegemonic knowledge acquisition (Nichols, 2010: 130). Furthermore, intrinsic to this thesis is a reflexive and circumspective core that dictates the directionality of the research towards being itself a space for resistance.

Power is seen as integral to state control, which in turn is seen as a mechanism to manage those who are given membership of the state, as well as to exclude 'others' that are viewed as un-associated with the state. The modern racial state manipulates an array of apparatuses to wield power over recognition and as Lentin and McVeigh (2006: 11) propose:

> The state is a central player in racial matters; the modern state carries out racial classification, surveillance and punishment of the population; it distributes resources along racial lines; it simultaneously facilitates and obstructs racial discrimination.

The state defines and reinforces criteria for membership through categorization and the creation of notions of homogeneity under one nation. Similarly Goldberg (2002: 9) proposes,

> The state has the power by definition to assert itself or to control those within the state… [and] the power to exclude from state protection. In these senses, the modern state has readily lent itself conceptually to, as it has readily been defined by, racial formation. For central to the sorts of racial constitution that have centrally defined modernity is the power to exclude and by extension include in racially ordered terms, to dominate through the power to categorize differentially and hierarchically, to set aside by setting apart… [These are] processes aided integrally by…the law and policy-making, by bureaucratic apparatuses and governmental technologies like census categories, by inventing histories and traditions, ceremonies and cultural imaginings.

To a degree this thesis would like to question, 'the racist criteria for membership in the national collectivity itself' (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992: 22). The thesis hopes to counter the defining of nationhood under homogeneous, essentialist notions and dispel notions that heterogeneous populations are necessarily divisive. The aim is to reveal and contribute greater understanding of racism by recognising that Racial state configurations maintain inequalities by placing prominence on difference rather than commonality, thus creating, 'a system of subordination' (Lentin and McVeigh, 2006: 10). Furthermore, According to Mohanty (2002: 505), postmodernist discourse valorizes difference over commonality, which is found to be problematic because, 'in knowing differences and particularities, we can better see the connections and commonalities because no border or boundary is ever complete or rigidly determining' (Mohanty, 2002: 506).

1.3 The nation state and identity

The focus of this study is on processes of identification, as well as the relation of knowledge/power to identity formation, rather than fixing on the assumption that identities are immutable notions of belonging or possessions with permanency (Skey, 2011: 342). By studying the extent to which identities are made meaningful through everyday expression by 'ordinary' people, the research assesses the making of meanings or concepts relating to identity. In particular, it explores how nation state

identity has become 'sedimented' in the Irish context (Laclau, 1990).[9] More generally, it is commonly presumed that for most of the world, 'national identity' has supplanted or assimilated ethnic identity as the most important form of identification (Tovey *et al.*, 1989: 9), yet ethno-national identifications still persist even against the tides of regionalization and globalization.

By placing emphasis on the socially constructed nature of identity formation, it does not neglect consideration of debate on nationalism/globalization. Instead, by approaching identity as socially constructed, it simply permits the perspective that the permanency of the nation cannot be assumed. As Tovey *et al.* (1989: 14) elaborate, in the past 'nationalist ideology portrayed "the nation" as an already existent fact – as a natural consequence of differences in culture. However much of the activity of national movements was devoted to constructing and constituting the nation which was to control its own affairs and command its citizens.' In contrast to perceiving the nation as naturally essential and enduring, this study is potentially more accurate in conceiving of political communities as defined by members themselves, in nationalist terms or not. Such a tack is 'therefore also a way of avoiding nationalism's "reification fallacy", the propensity to accept as an already established fact that which one wants to have come into existence' (Fossum, 2012: 342). A further dilemma of such false reification is that it may also progress to an understanding of political organization as being integral and inseparable from conceptions of nation states. This creates a tautological argument about the nation that is normative (Levy, 2004: 160). By not following the presumption that the nation is a predetermined fact of social enquiry, this study attempts to overcome what Beck (2003: 454) concedes, 'to some extent, much of social science is a prisoner of the nation state.'

Conversely however, the existential reality is that a majority of people are prisoners of nation state formation, even with globalised migratory flows and technological advancements in transportation. Within this era of flux, people privileged enough to be in a position to migrate, and traverse the globe, still may find themselves disadvantaged. As Anderson (2013: 9) suggests, 'immigration is not just about "them"

[9] Butler (1988: 524) also describes 'a sedimentation of gender norms that produces the peculiar phenomenon of a natural sex, or a real woman, or any number of prevalent and compelling social fictions, and that this is a sedimentation that over time has produced a set of corporeal styles which, in reified form, appear as the natural configuration of bodies into sexes which exist in a binary relation to one another.'

but is fundamentally about "us".' Similarly, the transposition of this would be to point out what Billig (1995: 61) indicates as nationalist thinking that involves conceiving the "us" and "them" and the assumed naturalness of the world divided into nation states. This occurs whereby the psycho-social cognisance or perceived notions of the world become implicated in the creation of alienations based on fixed demarcations of national identities. The nation state, similarly to national identity, as seen through the lens of social constructivism, simply becomes naturalized for a particular dominant group. As Laclau (1990: 35) elucidates, with such naturalization 'the system of possible alternatives tends to vanish and the traces of the original contingency fade.'

This research does not necessarily make the presumption of the nation state as naturalized; instead such notions are recognised as integral to the shaping and informing of individuals' national identities. The approach taken within this project is towards "reactivation" through disruptive work of the socio-political by developing a thesis that articulates a more accurate comprehension of self and collective identity within the current collectively conceived nation state of Ireland. By disrupting 'the sedimented forms of "objectivity" [that] make up the field of what we call the social' (Laclau, 1990: 34) this research facilitates the recognition of potential alternatives and modification of past and present understandings. Laclau (1990: 34) conjectures a retracing of the historical so as to demystify and bring about a restoration of more accurate understandings;

> The moment of original institution of the social is the point at which its contingency is revealed, since that institution, as we have seen, is only possible through the repression of options that were equally open. To reveal the original meaning of an act, then, is to reveal the moment of its radical contingency – in other words, to reinsert it in the system of real historic options that were discarded…by showing the terrain of original violence, of the power relations through which that instituting act took place.

Importantly, in what could be accurately related to the socially constructed notion of Irish homogeneity, revivalism and the birth of the Irish nation state, Laclau (1990: 34) points out, 'insofar as an act of institution has been successful, a "forgetting of the origins" tends to occur…'. Such recognition of the amnesia surrounding a more

truthful understanding of the historical development of the nation state provides impetus for the progression of this research.

In keeping with this trend, Skey (2011: 342) states there have been a '… growing number of empirical studies that are now shifting attention to focus on forms of nationalism and identification at the level of the everyday.' Similarly Chaney (2002: 4) asserts, 'The everyday is generally the bedrock of social reality, what can be taken for granted.' In summarising the argument for the justification of his piece of work entitled, *Banal Nationalism*, Billig (2009: 351) concludes

> By looking upwards towards the global or downwards towards secessionist moments, analysts have avoided looking directly at one of the most important social phenomena of the age. They have left an enormous hole right at the centre of the study of contemporary nationalism.

Billig continues, in reference to the United States, 'If the most powerful nationalism passes unrecognized and unstudied as "nationalism", then there is what… [one] might call an elephant in the sociological room. The academic avoidance of this metaphorical elephant certainly merits critical engagement' (Billig, 2009).

From the positions of Laclau (1990), Skey (2011) and Billing (2009), it becomes evident that there are several fundamental knowledge gaps that can be recognized which require further in-depth exploration: first, the study of the historical context, development and progression of nationalism, taken from a critical position that views the very concept, of the globe comprising of the collective of nation states, as a socially fabricated phenomenon. This also raises the problem of 'adopting the tenets of methodological nationalism, whether in the academic sphere or elsewhere, part of a wider – and largely entrenched – set of processes that legitimizes and naturalizes discourse of the nation' (Skey, 2011: 334). A void in research specific to 'Irish' identity and its conceived socially constructed actuality, relates to researching at a more localized level, or as Skey (2011: 334) implores, it is at the level of the everyday 'that we must try and understand how and why identities are lived and made meaningful.' Similarly, in remedying the bias relating to contemporary analysis that places over-emphasis on principles and ideals, '…and to arrive at a more complete picture of the social realities of toleration…' Dobbernack and Modood (2011: 16) maintain that, 'we need to be concerned with local practices of accommodation and

conviviality that are often supported by pragmatic reasons, as well as with local and contextualized moral reasons for granting toleration.' As introduced above and further elaborated in the subsequent chapters, both of these vacuums in research are to an extent accommodated for within the methodological approach employed.

At a deeper level, this thesis explores issues relating to neo-liberal governmentality. In consideration of the ideology of neoliberalism, Goldberg (2009: 332) provides a laconic description:

> Neoliberalism is the undertaking, then, to maximise corporate profits and efficiencies by reducing costs – most notably as a consequence of taxes, tariffs, and regulations. It has touted itself as the defender of freedom. But it is a peculiar sort of freedom to which neoliberalism is committed. It seeks above all to protect and expand the freedom of *flows* of capital, goods, and services, and more recently information. It is expressly for letting the market regulate itself so far as the artificial constraints of politics allow. It thus places faith in the market's capacity to optimize resource allocation and expand employment capacity as a result of sustained profitability, subsequent economic growth, and "trickle-down" charitability. It follows that neoliberalism is committed to denationalizing industry and deunionizing labour power in the name of limiting state regulation, reducing public costs, and freeing capital and its interests from constraint. The perceived result is dramatically if not completely to roll back the need for public funding, institutions, and resources.

Complementing this understanding, the notion of governmentality is seen as focusing on integral connections between the micro- and macro- political strata but also defines developments of new structures of socio-political order. Neoliberal governmentality then is less to dispense with the state than profoundly shift state priorities; to redirect the nation state to epitomize private interests and relentless economization. Fittingly, as Lemke (2001: 12) explains, 'by means of the notion of governmentality the neo-liberal agenda for the "withdrawal of the state" can be deciphered as a technique for government…shifting the regulatory competence of the state onto "responsible" and "rational" individuals'. In ways, the government could be seen as another strand of aristocracies wanting to emulate 'the owners franchisees, and top managers [who] want to control subordinates, but they want their own positions to be as free of

rational constraints – as inefficient – as possible' (Ritzer, 2011: 145). Yet this would seem to complement the more classical notion of the nature and power of authority in bureaucracy, one where 'the office hierarchy is monocratically organised' (Weber, 1948: 197) and where emphasis is place on structure. In this way, bureaucracy is identified with supposed reason 'and the process of rationalization with mechanism, depersonalisation, and oppressive routine' (Gerth and Mills, 1948: 50).

In contrast to this, according to Lemke (2001: 13*ff.*) is the Foucaultian view that, 'the neo-liberal strategy does indeed consist of replacing (or at least supplanting) out-dated rigid regulatory mechanisms by developing techniques of self-regulation…' Lemke (2001: 13*ff.*) continues by insisting that 'political analysis must start to study the "autonomous" individual's capacity for self-control and how this is linked to forms of political rule and economic exploitation.' In keeping with Foucault's orientation towards the analysis of two distinct directives of research that are described as intersecting at many points but refer back to a common axis, this research directly includes, 'the examination of the *technologies of the self* by which processes of subjectivization bring the individual to bind himself on his own identity and consciousness and at the same time, to an external power' (Agamben, 1998: 11), while indirectly incorporating, 'the study of the political techniques…with which the State assumes and integrates the care of the natural life of individuals into its very center' through structures of modern power.

Such subjectification is related to the concept and study of biopolitics, which can be précised as the politicization of "bare life" in contrast to qualified life. Throughout civilization sovereign power has been and is acquired by whom-ever has the authority to regulate the state of exception (Agamben, 2004). The state of exception affords the state self-authorization to possess extraordinary power, and even extrajudicial power to restrict, restrain and even disappear, disobedient subjects or unruly populations in the name of securitization (Goldberg, 2009: 334).

Such a circumstance occurs when the sovereign, through self-legitimation, frees itself from legal restraints to its power that might have ordinarily applied. The appropriately termed concepts of biopolitics or biopower, as described by Agamben (1998, 2004), may be understood as the continuous contestation of political control over "bare life". Explicitly, it is the supremacy of the sovereign to transcend or alter at a whim the rule

of law of the land in the name of the public "good" and to empower it so as to determine who can be included into the political body and who is to be excluded. As Agamben (1998: 9*ff.*) points out, 'after all, human politics is distinguished from that of other living beings in that it is founded, through a supplement of politicity [*policita*] tied to language, on a community not simply of the pleasant and the painful but of the good and the evil and of the just and the unjust'.

At a philosophical level, this thesis questions the link between politics of exclusion, sovereign power and "bare life", through the recognition of the concept of biopolitics, as developed by Michel Foucault, Hannah Arendt and Giorgio Agamben, amongst others. From the onset it adopts a methodological approach that aims to reveal insight into such a concept as bio-power by acknowledging and advocating that, as Agamben (1998: 10) states,

> Only within a biopolitical horizon will it be possible to decide whether the categories whose opposition founded modern politics (right/left, private/public, absolutism/democracy, etc.) – and which have been steadily dissolving, to the point of entering today into a real zone of indistinction – will have to be abandoned or will, instead, eventually regain the meaning they lost in that very horizon. And only a reflection that, taking up Foucault's and Benjamin's suggestion, thematically interrogates the link between bare life and politics, a link that secretly governs the modern ideologies seemingly most distant from one another, will be able to bring the political out of its concealment and, at the same time, return thought to its practical calling.[10]

In concluding this section, the present study thus investigates perceived *Irishness* via the intersectionality of subjective descriptions of self-identity and everyday life, banal nationalism and the supposed sedimented nature of the nation state within the psyche of subjects. As well as this, reflection on the relationship between the nation state, governmentality and biopolitics is made in relation to how such processes affecting the self, or selves, might be interpreted within participants' responses. When considering the analysis of the subject in Western civilization towards developing the

[10] Lentin (2009) provides further argument specifically with regard to the state of the Republic of Ireland and how it has created a 'state of exception', in which state racism combines with the Foucauldian notion of 'biopolitics'.

concepts of the discipline and docility of bodies Foucault (1993: 203 - 204) stresses that one needs to

> …take into account not only techniques of domination but also techniques of the self. Let's say: he has to take into account the interaction between those two types of techniques – techniques of domination and techniques of the self. He has to take into account the points where the technologies of domination of individuals over one another have recourse to processes by which the individual acts upon himself. And conversely, he has to take into account the points where the techniques of the self are integrated into structures of coercion and domination. The contact point, where the individuals are driven by others is tied to the way they conduct themselves, is what we can call, I think government. Governing people, in the broad meaning of the word, governing people is not a way to force people to do what the governor wants; it is always a versatile equilibrium, with complementarity and conflicts between techniques which assure coercion and processes through which the self is constructed or modified by himself.

It is for the precise reasons described above that this piece of socio-political research is being conducted. Such also provides justification for the more qualitative methodology taken which focuses on, if not oxymoronic, the postmodern sovereign Irish subject, so as to more fully comprehend its antonym, the abject made that is at once excluded.

1.4 The social construction of identities and knowledge based society

One of the main ambitions of this thesis is to acknowledge and investigate the theoretical 'de-centrings of modern thought' (Hall, 2000a: 145). It also explores the frailty or ambiguity of identities and relates these to what Hall (2000a: 146) defines as 'the relative decline, or erosion, the instability of the nation-state, of the self-sufficiency of national economies and consequently, of national identities as a point of reference, there has simultaneously been a fragmentation and erosion of collective social identity.'

As such, it is an exploration of the sense of anxiety and fear within the ambivalence of identity, due to a loss of both the fixity of the individual and social identity, intertwined with the directionality of capitalist globalization and *liquid modernity* (Bauman, 2001: 121-122). In this sense identity is understood as inherently ambiguous because in its current condition it is both linked territorially to nationality yet undermined by postmodernist theory.

The focus is on Irish 'life politics' (Bauman 2001: 121), which are described as 'identity construction, negotiation and assertion.' *Irishness*, nation state identity and pan-European notions of identity are investigated from the perspective of individuals living in Ireland. However, from the outset the presupposition is that these identity formations are seen as existing to provide a sense of perceived fixity, yet are destabilized at their core when understood merely as social constructs. The frailty of such constructs becomes visible when exposed to the rapidity of change associated with globalization and ensuing apparent postmodernity. Thus, this research explores a newly emergent territory, which in many ways might be termed 'a terra incognita' (Bauman, 2000: 48).

By exploring the constructed nature of Irish identity, this thesis aspires to compose a proposition of an 'imaginary political re-identification, reterritorialization' and to struggle for, as Hall (2000a: 149) emphasizes, 'a change of consciousness, a change of self-recognition, a new process of identification…' whereby 'the emergence into visibility of a new subject', or subjects may be conceived, the reason being the conceptualization and envisaging of a new sense of belonging that is complementary to postmodern constructivist theory. In a similar vein to understanding and countering gendered modes of representation, by understanding and unravelling the construction of identity formations, it may provide the possibility to represent alternative identities of *Irishness* and allow for the postulation of the existence of that which may be, at present, un-representable, excessive, and abject (De Lauretis, 1987; Coates, 1997: 78*f.*). As Coates (1997: 79) summarizes from Judith Butler's, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"*, but in this instance what could be interpreted in consideration of identity, 'The abject…is always contained in that which is excluding or expelling it. The "return of the abject" radically destabilizes that from which it was expelled, opening the site to reconfiguration and resignification.' Similarly, 'otherness' can be seen as the object of currently conceived notions of 'Irish' identity;

while ‘the other’ may exist in Irish society, or attempt to enter it, instead of becoming part of and redefining ‘Irish’ identity, its unrepresented status is simultaneously preserved and it may even be exiled figuratively, through the maintenance of predefined closed notions of *Irishness* and even physically through state intervention, such as in its extreme through repatriation, deportation or fencing off, walling and closure of borders. Although a somewhat paradoxical nexus, the stance taken is the assertion that, while allowing for collective solidarities that are inclusive of that which is abject, the re-identification of the Irish collectivity is conversely required to accommodate specific traditional cultural values, attitudes, behaviours and historic repertoires.

Accommodating both processes of globalization and at the same time maintaining cultural identity thus unfolds complexities. From the macro perspective, juggling processes of globalization with the preservation of culturally specific repertoires relates to the construction of contemporary knowledge societies. Knowledge driven societies purportedly allow for re/conciliation between the notion of identity in ambiguity. This is because knowledge driven societies submit that there is nothing that can truthfully bind subjects together other than a singular collective ‘humanity’, but juxtapose this against the notion of fixed yet multifarious individual identities that are layered over an imaginary true self. As the report by UNESCO (2005: 17) entitled *Towards Knowledge Societies* elucidates,

> The concept of knowledge societies encompasses much broader social, ethical and political dimensions. There is a multitude of such dimensions which rules out the idea of any single, ready made model, for such a model would not take sufficient account of cultural and linguistic diversity, vital if individuals are to feel at home in a changing world. Various forms of knowledge and culture always enter into the building of any society, including those strongly influenced by scientific progress and modern technology. It would be inadmissible to envisage the information and communication revolution leading – through a narrow, fatalistic technological determinism – to a single possible form of society.[11]

[11] Such technological determinism may eventually correspond to the posit made by Marx whereby science and general progress are seen as interrelated and integral to the dominance of machinery through objectified labour over “The worker” so that, ‘The worker appears as superfluous to the extent

Yet, the directionality of at least developed nations seems to be on course for a confined nihilistic determinism. Inglis (2008: 2) sought to explore and describe 'to what extent local everyday life is becoming global' but, in particular, how 'Western culture is seeping into the everyday lives of more and more people.' This is viewed as a 'mono-culturization' and erosion of discrete traditional practices which have evolved and developed over millennia and are passed down through processes of socialization (Inglis, 2008: 2). Such cultural practices derived from an unquestioned, pre-disposed way of being in the world, or a particular habitus, that produces a sense of belonging and collective identity (Inglis, 2008: 2).

With the eradication of identities constructed through notions of fixity and territorial association, be it nation state or beyond, comes the threatening extinction of local or indigenous forms of knowledge. This leads to the contestation that, according to Clifford (2000: 105), "Westernization" may not necessarily have been a linear progress. Almost simultaneously Clifford (2000: 105) compounds this previously stated view by reinforcing the notion of some sort of distinction based on advancement between pre-modern and modern by claiming that, 'Most histories of global development have had few second thoughts about people on the margins: "pre-modern" societies are destined either to assimilate or to vanish in a relentless homogenizing process.' Though it reads quite definitively, by ascribing such terms, that explicitly suggest temporal positioning along a notion of progress that is linear, such statements subtly reinforce a fatalism leading towards an assimilated oneness that is concomitant with current trends in globalization. What Clifford is attempting to acknowledge, however, is in fact highlighting the flaw in such ascriptions and shedding light on what becomes obscured by constant rhetoric of globalization and cultural assimilation. Clifford (2000: 105) describes that '…visions of globalization tend to smooth over the constant (re)articulation of cultural identities and differences…' In contrast, Holton (2005: 2) attempts to provide a critique of the fatalism many associate with globalization, by rejecting 'the view that globalisation happens, driven by various markets or technology, leaving human actors to adjust as best as they can'. Instead for Holton (2005: 2) globalization is both a consequence of human activity, and also a situational environment intended for human activity.

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that his action is not determined by [capital's] requirements' (Marx, 1973: 695). For more on this please refer to *The Grundrisse* (Marx, 1973).

The UNESCO (2005: 18) report is seen to attach discreetly, yet very purposely, the conditionality of the necessity to respect and follow scientific reasoning by avowing not only is

> …the fate of languages threatened with extinction. What is also at stake is the space we should make for local or indigenous forms of knowledge within knowledge societies whose development models highly value the codification forms specific to scientific knowledge. Fostering diversity also means nurturing the creativity of emerging knowledge societies. Such a prospect fulfils not only an abstract ethical imperative, it above all aims to raise in each society an awareness of the wealth of the forms of knowledge and capacities it possesses, in order to increase their value and take advantage of what they have to offer.

This thesis retains several reservations towards a rationale that places as superior scientific logicality; however, instead of getting distracted by critiquing the nuances in what is stated in the UNESCO report, with regard to the development of knowledge societies, this research proposes to go beyond the limiting aspect of fostering diversity for the benefit of scientific gain, by placing the process of re-identification as central, not only to the emergence of new forms of identities, but as paramount to the preservation of collective consciousnesses as a multitude of forms that may also evade or transcend what may be considered ethnocentric scientific thought.

1.5 The ethical imperative of knowledge, classification and categorization

This thesis accounts for the unavoidable politics of research and place centrally within it, as a component of the institution of academia, 'The Ethical Imperative of Knowledge' (Larson, 2001). The research is centred on the acknowledgement and supposition that truth is not a singular absolute, but rather established by perspectives that are produced and give order to experience (Larson, 2001). Integral to its construction is the paradoxical question, namely that 'unless one knows definitively what truth is how does or will anyone ever know when they have attained that knowledge which is truth?' Correspondingly, Larson (2001) argues that 'there is no definable objective position by which one can say what forms of organization are universally and absolutely valid.' What becomes apparent is that in attaining

knowledge the issues of perception and of who gets to be the judge of a truth claim becomes more the determinant. This relates to questions of power, societal influence and identification, where '… some discourses of truth are means of entrenching social hierarchies or practices of exclusion via class, race, sex, etc.' (Larson, 2001). Accordingly, the methodological approach is not merely about the attainment of knowledge as an end goal but to acknowledge the subjectivity of our understanding of what is deemed significant knowledge, and to structurally embed within the methodological process means by which individual subjectivities are actively accounted for; where hierarchical distributions of knowledge/power are diminished to give greater equalized weight to contributing voices, actors or subjects.

Of particular concern is the influence exerted by those who wield power over processes that produce knowledge. As a consequence, in recognizing and justifying first, the subjectivity of knowledge acquisition and secondly, the inherent relationship between knowledge and power, only then can this study be deemed apt in mitigating imbalanced power relations, through its integrated methodology and incorporated reflexivity. The specific methodological approach taken is central to fulfilling both the objective of, and obligation in accounting for, the ethical imperative of knowledge. In this respect key to the overall strategy and inbuilt methodology is the acknowledgement that, as Foucault (1997: 207) states,

> Intellectuals are no longer needed by the masses to gain knowledge: the masses know perfectly well, without illusion; they know far better than the intellectual and they are certainly capable of expressing themselves. But there exists a system of power which blocks, prohibits, and invalidates this discourse and this knowledge, a power not only found in manifest authority of censorship, but one that profoundly and subtly penetrates an entire societal network. Intellectuals are themselves agents of this system of power: the idea of their responsibility for "consciousness" and discourse forms part of the system.

From the position of Ireland as a contemporary Western, industrialized and information technologically driven society, which aspires to evolve into a knowledge society basing its economy on research and development, the fact that knowledge and

power can be viewed as 'essentially contested concepts' (Gallie, 1955; Heaney, 2000: 102) would seem as pertinent a consideration as ever. As James (2006: 294) argues,

> We need to put ethics back into the centre of politics – that is, deliberations over the principles that frame how we are to live with each other. Unless this is given priority, the current debates over postnationalism and cosmopolitanism, globalism and localism, are bound to end up repeating, in late-modern or postmodern terms, the dead-end modernist arguments over the relative merits of nationalism and internationalism.

If academia is a strand of civil society and inevitably plays a role in shaping politics as an integral component of polity-public, this would substantiate the argument that from within such institutional structures there is, and should be, recognition of the ethical imperative of knowledge production.[12]

Moreover, from the onset the study disregards categorizations by the state, or otherwise, and attempts to provide access and voice to all interested parties, including representative organizations of people restricted from entering Irish society. Such an approach is considered to mitigate cross-cultural misconceptions and promote solidarity amongst difference.

The foundation of the structured society is the human ability to make binary distinctions (Lévi-Strauss, 1978: 22*f.*; MacCormack and Strathern, 1980: 2). The mind builds up its perceptions of the world by perceiving opposites or contrasts. MacCormack and Strathern (1980: 2) add that 'the human mind seeks analogies with other contrastive phenomena and upon finding them encompasses the analogies into its system of classification.' On a conscious level people are aware of concrete manifestations rather than the relations themselves, but for structuralists the unconscious tendency to perceive relations is fundamental to the mind. Inglis (2008: 5) informs us, 'our knowledge of the world begins with classification systems…' and later considers that 'classifying people as similar and different is embedded in social life, both in the micro-events and practices of everyday life and in the macro-strategies of organizations, institutions and nation-states.' Such informs our understanding of culture and society within which myth arises so that individuals'

[12] This quite aptly complements Gallie (1955: 184*f.*) fitting description of democracy as being built on 'essentially contested concepts'.

minds ‘structure myth, and in a feedback loop myth instruct our perceptions of the phenomenological universe’ (MacCormack and Strathern, 1980: 6). Beyond this is to consider reinterpreting how we see our phenomenal universe and create orders through the classifications we are socialized to understand and construct. The justification for this being the acknowledgment that, ‘…the unity of knowledge is nothing else than the very unity of the social collectivity extended to the universe’ (Durkheim and Mauss, 1963: x). The fact that there are multifarious classifications and structures of society implies that, with such simultaneous variations across spacetime, conceptualising social collectivity in an alternative form may produce new forms of knowledge and new ways of existence that mitigate certain redundant social dilemmas of our time. Though not frivolous is the consideration as to whether society creates minds that categorize, or whether conversely, the individual mind has the intrinsic capacity to learn to classify. It may well be that it is an interplay between both. Nonetheless, the focus is also the task of interrogating the order produced by classificatory schemes and to see if such order creates preventable and illogical bias.

Like all concepts underpinning the construction of the self, there is no essentialist perception of ‘race’ or ‘ethnicity’ as formations of an absolute identity. The human mind has to be educated to think and visualize ‘race’ and/or ‘ethnicity’ (Gilroy, 1998: 838), to perceive it and to re/imagine its existence. It is not an absolute descriptive term; it is a floating signifier that refers to concepts of classification and the making meaning of practices within culture (Hall, 1997). For Goldberg (2009: 152) race is argued as ‘not simply a set of ideas or understandings. The category represents, more broadly, a way (or a set of ways) of being in the world, of living, of meaning-making. Those ways of being, living, and representation differ across space and time, between the regions…’ Furthermore although ‘race’ has its antecedents in pre-modern times, Goldberg (2009: 329) argues that, ‘race is an irreducibly modern notion defining and refining modern state formation’ particularly within the contemporary era of world-transforming globalization. ‘Race is a foundational pillar of modernizing globalization, both in shaping and coloring the structures of modern being and belonging, development and dislocation, state dynamism and social stasis’ (Goldberg, 2009: 329*f.*). For Lentin (2008: 490) race acts ‘as a more abstract signifier for separating human groups socially, politically and economically. As such, culture, ethnicity, religion, nationality and (but not always) skin colour can all stand for race at

different times'. Thus 'race' can be viewed as a structuring feature of modern Irish society, as well as other societies such as Britain (Gilroy, 1990: 114).

Gilroy (1998: 839) makes the ethical plea in *Race Ends Here* to counter racisms and injustices by making 'a more consistent effort to de-nature and de-ontologize "race" and thereby to disaggregate raciologies.' Linking to the ethical imperative proposed, the approach from the outset has been to incorporate into the conceptual framework a research strategy that undermines and disturbs 'the persistent normative claims of raciology' (Gilroy, 1998: 840) and ethnicity that are based on a false biological theory. That is not to attempt to make race or ethnicity obsolete but rather to interrogate their foundations and confront the reification of race and ethnicity, within the process of analysis and through (re)construction rather than deracination.[13]

Thus, a core precept is the subversion of racial and ethnic constructions while simultaneously recognising and acknowledging cultural ways of life as inherent to ethnicity. Racism exists where 'race as ordering, as management, sedimentation, sifting, as correction and disciplining, as empowering some while causing 'others' to buckle under that power has always relied on a plurality of processes' (Lentin, 2015: 1403). Race and forms of racist governmentality are also observable in more contemporary times as racial neoliberalism (Goldberg, 2009; Kapoor, 2013; Lentin, 2015: 1403), are existent and require study and exposure as having groundless foundations requiring undermining. The difficulty, then, is the technique with which to simultaneously expose the falseness of political racelessness which attempts to render race invisible, thus disguising ethno-racial injustices, while concurrently discrediting race as an identifier of differentiation. Further to this endeavour is to frame the research in an open manner that underscores the liquidity of identity and culture and mitigates what Gilroy (1990: 115) describes as 'ethnic absolutism', which is understood as,

> …a reproductive, essentialist understanding of ethnic and national difference which operates through an absolute sense of culture so powerful that it is capable of separating people off from each other and diverting them into social

[13] For more on such debates please refer to works such as 'Between Camps: Nations, Cultures and the Allure of Race' (Gilroy, 2000), '"Ethnicity Denial" and Racism: The Case of the Government of Ireland Against Irish Travellers' (McVeigh, 2007), Alana Lentin's (2015) article, 'What does race do?' and Kapoor's (2013) work, 'The advancement of racial neoliberalism in Britain'.

> and historical locations that are understood to be mutually impermeable and incommensurable.

Nonetheless, it is not to reject nationalism outright but to uncover modes of national development that have occurred and are still emergent, most importantly, to analyse if such have a tendency towards 'ethnic absolutism' or in contrast, perturb national *insiderism*. A supposed ethnically 'Irish' identity 'is a group identity that encapsulates all other identities and roles (gender, class occupational, local or regional etc.); and it defines and delimits the acceptable range of relationships one may claim with both insiders and outsiders to the group' (Tovey *et al.*, 1989: 5). The purpose is not only to test the range of what is acceptable, but to investigate the effects of the decentring of modern thought on the formation of identity, whereby ethnicity is understood as a self-consciously produced social construct. Furthermore, an undertaking is to make less ambiguous what it means to be Irish by denying archaic or even fabricated notions of group affiliation. Instead it is to make contemporary *Irishness* less arcane by embracing the existential reality of 'fluid' or 'liquid' modernity and allowing for the formation of a perceived authentic identity that better complements such theory.

However, a prior difficulty to this relates to the reproduction of ethnic distinctions. Divulging two main arguments, Barth (1969: 9*f.*) presents the perspective that instead of social isolation, exposure and social interaction between assumed ethnicities can reinforce ethnic distinctions:

> First, it is clear that boundaries persist despite a flow of personnel across them. In other words, categorical ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of mobility, contact and information, but do entail social process of exclusion and incorporation whereby discrete categories are maintained despite changing participation and membership in the course of individual life histories. Secondly, one finds that stable, persisting, and often vitally important social relations are maintained across such boundaries, and are frequently based precisely on the dichotomized ethnic statuses. In other words, ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of social interaction and acceptance, but are quite to the contrary often the very foundations on which embracing social systems are built. Interaction in such a social system does not lead to its

> liquidation through change and acculturation; cultural differences can persist despite inter-ethnic contact and interdependence.

From an Irish perspective of self-interest, what becomes clear relates to the balance between the perceived degeneration of values gained from ethnic distinction and the merits gained by accepting contemporary modernity to its fullness. However, from a more independent position, this thesis attempts to comprehend the power dynamics of social processes of exclusion and incorporation, as well as patterns of stratification, dominance and subordination. As Tovey *et al.* (1989: 7) state, for the reconstitution of identities, ethnic or otherwise, '…power relations are of immense significance in understanding how specific ethnic identities or systems of meanings have emerged and have taken the forms they have.' If Irish society is becoming more diverse and certain once assumed group identifications are not made superfluous and/or categorizations of ethnic distinctions do not alter accordingly, more inequitable power relations will emerge. With such an emergence, it is probable that increased internal social conflict will arise. In particular, by examining how categorizations affect certain groups on the margins of what is deemed to be 'Irish', proposals towards mitigating conflict may be postulated.

In addition to ethnic and/or racial considerations, a further dimension that is proactively queried is gender performativity and ascription. Thus, by mitigating gender bias, the aspiration is to perturb dominant ways in which conceptions of gender are reified, naturalized and become loaded with distracting misconceptions and false assumptions. Similar to other forms of individuality, gender constitution can be interrelated with phenomenology; where reality consists of objects and events, which are phenomena, as they are perceived or understood in human consciousness. Such a phenomenological approach constructs analyses by grounding theory in lived experience and looks to reveal 'the way in which the world is produced through the constituting acts of subjective experience' (Butler, 1988: 522). Similarly to what Butler (1988: 519) describes, as a component of identity

> gender is in no way a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts proceed; rather, it is an identity tenuously constituted in time – an identity instituted through a *stylized repetition of acts*. Further, gender is instituted through the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the

> mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and enactments of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self.

Though not as a central theme of analysis, the fixity of gender is troubled from the outset through the holistic methodological construction and thesis synthesis. Similarly to race or ethnicity, this is not to write gender out of the research but an attempt to actively disturb normative gender assumptions. The overarching objective being to initiate and construct, not only as unprejudiced and impartial a process as possible, but to actively offset gender bias within the thesis planning, development and outcomes. In order to achieve this, within the process of this thesis, acts of gender in the production and writing are tacitly minimized or used to challenge gender category norms (as detailed in chapter four).

Also within the limitations of the thesis remit, this study attempts to embed in the practice of knowledge production throughout its planning, implementation and synthesis a prescriptive approach that contemplates gender from an anti-essentialist perspective. This is achieved by recognising 'an imperative to acknowledge the existing complexity of gender which our vocabulary invariably disguises and to bring that complexity into a dramatic cultural interplay without punitive consequences' (Butler, 1988: 530). Also where possible reflection, consideration and subversion of the reification of the historical sedimentation of sexuality, as much as the sedimentation of national identities, is taken into account (as mentioned above). Furthermore, if the motivation is towards a transformation of social relations and alleviation of hegemonic social conditions, then it is not only to look at the mundane ways in which individual acts seed prejudiced conditions, but to extrapolate and theorize beyond the individual acts as they are manifested.

1.6 Structure of the dissertation

As the overall approach of this research is grounded in an exploratory style, it is pertinent to clearly detail the trajectory of thought, discussion and analysis. The aim of the thesis within the context of contemporary Ireland is detailed heretofore. In order to justify and complement the central aims present, the introductory section on imagining *Irishness* created a more enclosed setting of identity studies within the more narrowed scope and discipline of Sociology. Specifically, it orientated towards

looking at 'Irish' identity through the prism of ethnic and racial studies. Rather than placing 'Irish' identity into a discrete definable locality it highlighted the unfixed arrangement and fragility of such concepts through a historical account of the evolution of the concept of identity and its interrelated discursive vocabularies.[14] Introducing *Irishness* which is centred on national identity then evolved into a critique of the assumed fixed nature of the nation state itself. The evolution of the supposed homogenous nation into what may be termed the racial state is shown to provide justifications for authoritative population migration control. It is through the deconstruction of notions of identity that resistance to excessive state power and its anti-heterogeneous predilections can be asserted; the overarching supposition being that commonalities prevail over difference amongst a diverse population. As it is deemed vitally relevant to the overall thesis construction and synthesis, detailed above is consideration of the ethical imperative in knowledge acquisition, in addition to processes of categorizations. These sections together encapsulate the thesis within more focused and confined limits pertaining to perceived *Irishness*, but also set the scene in both a purposefully expansive and exploratory form which is in keeping with the overall aims and objectives of the thesis.

Chapter two develops the study by focusing on theoretical issues and detailing the theoretical framework employed. The construction of 'Irish' national identity is examined from the theoretical perspective of essentialism within a social constructivist framework. Theoretical rationale is related to hegemonic neo-colonial knowledge/power relations, which are illustrated as having been manifested in the passing of the 2004 ICR. What is interpreted and theorized as a regressive shift in Irish constitutional legislature, is depicted as copper-fastening the racialization of the Irish nation state.

Following this, chapter three describes and details *jus sanguinis* legislation in the historical context. This is detailed in relation to the manifestation of social policy in

[14] In order to provide a more decentred approach to describing the socially construction of 'Irish' identity, in addition to mitigating assumptive claims on *Irishness* and the potential reification of 'Irish' identity specifically, this introduction expressively avoids chronicling a literature review of broader studies into *Irishness* as the explanatory foundation of this research. Instead, discursively interwoven throughout, references are made to literature where appropriate. For additional sociologically orientated research into *Irishness* please refer to works by Daniel Faas, Richard Layte, Ronit Lentin, Elaine Moriarty, Brian Fanning, Máirtín Mac an Ghaill, Sean Ó Riain, Mary Corcoran, Declan Kiberd, Kieran Keohane, Pat O'Connor, Gavan Titley, Brian Conway, Michel Peillon, Tom Inglis, Stephen Loyal, Andreas Hess, Robbie McVeigh, amongst others.

legislative terms as it is fixed within the constitutional amendments following the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum, as well as the 2009 Habitual Residence Condition amendment,[15] and International Protection Bill enacted as the International Protection Act in 2015.[16]

Chapter four explains the methodological approaches, as well as the underlying principles guiding each approach. The thesis foci are a description of the phases of the design, the sampling style and methods, the process of analysis, and the methodological conclusions, including limitations.

The central concepts that come to the fore in the results from the cross-analysed data are discussed in chapters five to nine. Chapter five presents participants' perceptions of being Irish; chapter six details historical *Irishness*, chapter seven compares 'being' with 'becoming' Irish; chapter eight documents the construction of Ethnicity, Race and the Irish nation; chapter nine describes *Irishness* in the context of economics, state governance and world views. The sections interlink and instead of visualizing the directionality of the discussions in a linear progression, it is easier to imagine the topic as iterative, which paints an overall picture of individuals' perceptions of 'Irish' identity.

The concluding tenth chapter reviews themes of *Irishness* sequentially and discusses section by section the considerations deemed pertinent to the overall exploratory purposes of the study. In keeping with the grounded methodological approach advocated, a central postulation is proposed based on empirical information reviewed. Thus the development of the thesis postulated in chapter ten is presented as contributing to knowledge within the discipline of Sociology and field of ethnic and racial studies. Theorization is expounded based on the data analysis and well-informed inferences are posited, analysed and justified. The closing section concludes by discussing final remarks, as well as opportunity for future research of relevance to the topic.

[15] Hereafter the 2009 Habitual Residence Condition amendment is referred to interchangeably as the 2009 HRC amendment.
[16] Henceforth the International Protection Bill and the 2015 International Protection Act are referred to respectively as the 2015 IPB and 2015 IPA.

2 Theorizing identity and *Irishness*

Within this chapter, theoretical concepts are interrelated with results and conclusions from the Preliminary Phase, which explored the superficiality of 'Irish' identity using a reflexive social experimental approach (BouAynaya, 2011). As such it further expands on and develops sociological and philosophical theorization. Such theorizations expand from those familiarized in chapter one and together provide the underpinning justifications of the thesis.

Initially the general problematic aspect of identity is highlighted and deliberated drawing primarily from renowned contemporary theorists and scholars. From the examination of theory, an initial proposition conveyed is that instead of being seen as a rationale which is inherently contradictory, essentialism can be seen to exist, residing within social constructivism. In order to place theory within a spatio-temporal context of Irish society, leading on from this is the historical construction of 'Irish' national identity. This is provided as a backdrop or prequel to contextualize temporal changes in Irish citizenship acquisition. Such contextualization is measured in a theoretical manner. Thus within the subsequent section it is theorized that more static definitions of identity are in conflict with the natural progression of any labile contemporary society. Consequently, the ability to freely self-identify is dependent on mechanisms that counter the subjugation of a given minority. If such arrangements are not in place, inequitable power relations occur. Such mechanisms are seen as crucial to the ideological framework of any egalitarian social democracy.

2.1 Problematizing identity

The theoretical foundations of this thesis are based on constructivist identity theory. The research examines the processes which contingently produce and reproduce collective identities and considers the propensities of individuals to identify with particular collectivities.

Individuals and groups are viewed as preserving repertoires of possible identities or identities that are multi-layered (Hall, 1996: 4). Hall's (1996: 3*f.*) suggestion is that,

> If we translate this essentializing conception to the stage of cultural identity – is it that collective or true self hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed "selves" which a people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common and which can stabilize, fix or guarantee an unchanging 'oneness' or cultural belongingness underlying all the other superficial differences. It accepts that identities are never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions.

For Hall (2000a: 146) the logic of identity is that it has,

> a kind of existential reality…the logic of the language of identity is extremely important to our own self-conceptions. It contains the notion of the true self, some real self, inside there, hiding inside the husks of all the false selves that we present to the rest of the world.

The suggestion is also that subjects maintain ways of presenting themselves to the world that are dependent on the credibility and usefulness of such identity in differing circumstances. Post-structuralists [17] view increasing globalization and migration-related diversity as creating fragmented societies within which people's identities are 'hybrid and shifting' (Faas, 2010: 11).

Contemporary identities are seen as multiple, performative, liquefied and multidimensional. In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Goffman (1959: 3) considers perceptions and performance at the level of the individual and the

[17] Although some may not self-subscribe as post-structuralists, examples of such thinkers include, Judith Butler, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan, amongst others.

interpretation of individuals' physiognomies, by not only looking at the perspective of the other but at

> …the point of view of the individual who presents himself before them. He may wish to think highly of him, or to think that he thinks highly of them, or to obtain no clear-cut impression; he may wish to ensure sufficient harmony so that the interaction can be sustained, or to defraud, get rid of, confuse, mislead, antagonize, or insult them.

As Butler (1993: 12) discusses, albeit in the context of sexuality, but which could also be interpreted across many inscribed characteristics of subjectification, this poststructuralist perspective is a 'rewriting of discursive performativity' where production through the performative is recognised as 'the reiterated practice of *racializing* interpellations' (Butler, 1993: 18). Importantly, Butler (1988: 528) sees the ascription of interiority as itself a publicly regulated and sanctioned form of essence fabrication (further discussed in section 2.2). Hence, subjects are influenced by their surrounding environment, social incentive structures, demands for local conformity, broader cultural changes and, within the context of this thesis, the influence of manipulative techniques used by cultural or political entrepreneurs. Bauman (2000: 8) places the human condition within the concept of 'fluid modernity' where the individual is '…now malleable to an extent un-experienced by, and unimaginable for, past generations'.

Thus the underlying theory relies on the notion that observable heterogeneity among individuals is translated into collective perceptions, goals and behaviours. From this identities are malleable, tradable, and deployable at different points. Contemporary theory suggests that individuals have repertoires of identities that are activated differently in response to changing incentive structures, and it is recognised that some actors have disproportionate influence on modes in the commencement or consolidation of specific identities at the group level, such that power relations differ within the societal structure.

The initial ambition of the research is to explore, with reference to Foucault's (1977) work, e.g. *Discipline and Punish*, the interrelationship between 'power-knowledge' and discourse in the creation of modes of self-policing amongst the populace, namely self-identification and the identity formation of 'the other'. However, rather than

decentralising 'the subject' by placing emphasis on 'a theory of discursive practice' (Foucault, 1970, xiv) this thesis seeks to reconceptualize 'the subject' in an attempt to, 'rearticulate the relationship between subjects and discursive practices.' According to Hall (1996: 2) this is considered where '…the question of identity reoccurs, or rather, if one prefers to stress the process of subjectification to discursive practices, and the politics of exclusion which all such subjectification appears to entail, the question of *identification.*'

From this analysis of theory, focusing on the construction of 'identity', what is then highlighted is the manner in which, through these societal constructs, the cyclical nature of the nation state is not only initiated but perpetuated through the reproduction of collective identifications. The cyclical nature of this paradigm creates a tendency for the nation state to gravitate towards emphasising homogeneity over accommodating difference. In order to define the nation as described by members within society, through discourse and negotiation, participants from the Main Stage of the research contribute their perceived views of *Irishness.*[18] From here an exploration to compare such definitions against the state's role in constructing national identity can be conducted. The rationale of identification is related to justify/falsify the legislative boundaries that are drawn to fashion difference between the "them" and "us" of contemporary Irish society.

In drawing on the interconnectedness in understanding "us" and "them" Bridget Anderson (2013: 2) opens the fittingly titled book *Us and Them? The Dangerous Politics of Immigration Control* by stating that,

> The politics of immigration reveal the volatility of categories that are imagined as stable, including citizenship itself. Judgements about who is needed for the economy, who counts as skilled, what is and isn't work, what is a good marriage, who is suitable for citizenship, and what sort of state-backed enforcement is acceptable against 'illegals', affect citizens as well as migrants. The exclusion of migrants helps define the privileges and the limitations of citizenship, and close attention to the border (physical and metaphorical) reveals much about how we make sense of ourselves…citizens and migrants

[18] For supplemental contemporary views on *Irishness* as expressed by members of the public, please refer to the Preliminary Phase / pilot study (BouAynaya, 2011). Hereafter, the Preliminary Phase will be referred to interchangeably as the Preliminary Phase or pilot study.

define each other, and that they do so through sets of relations that shift and are not in straightforward binary opposition.

The politics of immigration is the key aspect of Anderson's (2013: 2) understanding of the modern state which depicts itself as a *community of value*. Similar to active everyday life, members who exhibit shared values such as common ideals and behaviour, undertake certain rituals of social relations within the community and it is these commonplace activities, underpinnings of identity that this thesis wishes to explore. In a sense this thesis empirically explores, through analysing subjective opinions on issues of identity, ethnicity and citizenship, not only the composition of the *community of value* but also its durability and perpetuation. This is placed within a national specificity with a focus on Ireland. However, to avoid what Fossum (2012: 341) terms 'nationalism's "reification fallacy"' or in other words, 'the propensity to accept as an already fact that which one wants to have come into existence', what are also considered are identities and conceptions of the self and other that may not be nationalist but based on perhaps a novel or somewhat different forms of identification. Although cosmopolitanism does not necessarily need to be interpreted in juxtaposition with nationalism, it would provide one such concept as a point of reference.

Furthermore, it seeks to relate dominant normative understandings that comprise the *community of value* and investigate the interrelation of such with legislation specific to citizenship and migration. This is achieved by considering as normative both the citizen and migrant, as well as legal constructs. Finally, the intention is to investigate if new concepts of forms of identification can be attained through purposively constructing scenarios for deliberation specifically on the topic of new processes of re-identification.

2.2 Essentialism within social constructivism

Previous models of identity that rely on 'primordial' or 'essential' characteristics of individuals or groups suggest the descriptive nature of identity. Primordialism bases its assumptions on the notion that the true political or social nature of an individual or group, and their identity, is fixed or static. It places people within "zoological" groups, where their essential characteristics are divined with the assumption that accurate predictions can be made about the preferences, perceptions and behaviour of

their members without relying on sound empirical information to make such judgements. The approach of the current study relies on theory that contrasts with such notions of identities as being 'rigid, long-standing and primordial; that resist assimilation and erosion from education, secularisation and modernization' (Oberschall, 2010: 180).

Instead this thesis develops on socio-psychological theorists, such as Tajfel (1981: 150) who posit that social identity creates in-group preference or ethnocentrism, which is a derivative of social categorization. Intrinsic to this is the rejection of 'the other'. Such theories lead to active social separation by which minorities create space in which they can better shape and control their shared political environment within a representative democratic landscape of inevitable subordination (Butler and Ruane, 2009: 84). According to Oberschall, 'Self esteem, social identity, and ethnocentrism are validated in social interactions with like-minded persons' (Oberschall, 2010: 180). Similarly, the politics of identity (Huntington, 1996: 125) considers concepts of primordial ethnic identities unconvincing and favours the construction of group identities through social psychology of inter-group relations such that power holders may create identities using semiotics and myths to emotionally affect populations and contrive nationalistic solidarities. As Oberschall (2010: 181) states,

> Manipulative elites assume fragility in ethnic group relations and social construction of identities, as Identity politics does, but highlights top-down more than bottom-up mobilization. Elites contend for power by manipulating social divisions and blowing them out of proportion with threat, fear and hate discourse and propaganda, and with no-compromise, aggressive, crisis politics.

When conceptualized from the sociological perspective and related to what is edifying, association by identity can be similarly compared with culture, which is seen as a unique approach to life of a group with, 'meanings, values and ideas embodied in institutions, in social relations, in systems of belief, in mores and customs, in the uses of objects and material life' (Clark *et al.*, 1976: 10). Furthermore, Clark *et al.* (1976: 11) propose that culture, '…embodies the trajectory of group life through history: always under conditions and with raw materials which cannot wholly be of its own making.' Similarly McRobbie (1977: 45) describes resolutely that,

> …culture is about the pre-structured but still essentially expressive and creative capacities of the group in question. The forms which this expressivity takes are 'maps of meaning' which summarize and encapsulate their social and material life experiences. But these cultural artefacts or configurations are not created out of nothing. Individuals are born into what are already constructed sets of social meanings which can then be worked on, developed and even transformed.

Taking this social constructivist approach, 'Irish' identity can be interpreted as 'the accumulated legacy of previous generations and how they are interpreted today' (White, 2008: 84).

This defining process of self-identification by the inhabitants of the island of Ireland, requires exploration and scrutinization, so as to oppose a political schema that, relying on mythological concepts and falsities, implements immigration policies and legislation that could be interpreted as exclusionary. It is this very rationale that has informed this study and provided the impetus for this thesis. As Billig (1995: 61) highlights,

> This nationalist way of thinking, even when it is ingrained as habitual, is not straightforward. Just as a dialectic of remembering and forgetting might be said to sustain 'national identity', so this 'identity' involves a dialectic of inwardness and outwardness. The nation is always a nation in a world of nations. 'internationalism' is not the polar opposite of 'nationalism', as if it constitutes a rival ideological consciousness. Nationalism, like other ideologies, contains its contrary themes, or dilemmatic aspects. An outward-looking element of internationalism is part of nationalism and has accompanied the rise of nationalism historically.

Although Billig (1995: 69) argues that not only should national identity be seen as 'an inner psychological state' but that it ought to be conceptualized as a '…form of life which is daily lived in a world of nation states' (Billig, 1995: 68). Skey (2011: 332) stresses that 'moreover, it is a form of life so entrenched and taken-for-granted in many parts of the world that it is rarely commented upon' thus emphasising the banality of nationalism.

Post-modernists contend today that 'identities are social constructs, not defined or limited by language, race, ethnicity or any other concrete criteria' (White, 2008: 87). The postmodern world has fragmented all of that which provided people with fixed and firm locations as individuals (Ní Chonaill, 2009: 49). Although Brah (1996: 123) suggests, 'identity is neither fixed nor singular; rather it is a constantly changing relational multiplicity', 'Irish' identity seems to be persistently reconstructed and reinvented from an essentialist perspective. This provides the rationale for mechanisms of power and control whereby the construction of identities is visibly interrelated with difference and exclusion (Hall, 2000b: 234). The emphasis on

> The notion that identity has to do with people that look the same, feel the same, call themselves the same, is nonsense. As a process, as a narrative, as a discourse, it is always told from the position of the Other… written in and through ambivalence and desire (Hall, 2000a: 148*f.*).

What is fascinating is that identity is still defined effectively with the portrayal of 'the other', through an understanding that is essentialist, which is maintained by government and media, ultimately shaping the direction of policy-makers in dealing with contemporary societal issues and profoundly influencing public opinion. In fact, it has even been contended that, 'racism in Ireland was organised not by extreme right groups, but by ordinary journalists, politicians and writers' (Lentin and McVeigh, 2006: 4). Moreover, the suggestion is that although it is recognised that social identity theory proposes that conformity stems from psychological processes, being a member of a group is defined as the subjective perception of the self as a member of a specific category (Nass *et al.*, 1995); this would suggest a more constructivist understanding of personal, in-group identity.

Thus, what this research explores in the Irish context overall, is that there is an alternative or third space of in-betweenness that intertwines the dialectical arguments of essentialist notions of identity within a framework that is reflective of social constructivism. Thus, this blurring of identity politics is dissimilar to Bhabha's (1994: 162*ff.*) concept of hybridity, which is seen to create spaces that are inclusionary, and in fact is more insidious in its apparatus of regulation, control and ultimate continual exclusion of the Irish antonym. Like the contestation of gender essentialism, being

truly Irish or the false 'other' is only what is socially compelled and is in no sense ontologically necessitated (Butler, 1988: 528).

This binary relationship between 'insider' and 'outsider', with its reliance on primordial theorization based on false assumptions, may have a tendency to facilitate ethno-political conflict. Thus, unless contested through notions of inclusiveness, there is a grain of truth in Campbell's (1998) argument to suggest that the territorial state is the source of not only the marginalization of 'the other' but the exclusion and rejection of the 'outsider'. Similarly, Hardt and Negri (2000: xii) historicize that, 'wherever modern sovereignty took root, it constructed a Leviathan that overarched its social domain and imposed hierarchical territorial boundaries, both to police the purity of its own identity and to exclude all that was other.' According to Campbell (1998: 13), 'This is because inscribing the boundaries that make the installation of the nationalist imaginary possible requires expulsion from the resultant "domestic" space of all that comes to be regarded as alien, foreign and dangerous. The nationalist imaginary thus demands a violent relationship with the other.'

Ultimately, if the criteria for membership within the Irish national collectivity rely on concepts of the nation in racialized terms, then this dependency on essentialist principles is not only regressive, it is contrary to the aspirations of a social democratic state. It may even be seen as representative of developments in supranational governance that relies on subject constitution through governmentality and anachronistic colonial rationale (further elaborated below).

If the dynamics of collective identity formation and change were instead seen as fluid, rather than from an essentialist stand point, it would more likely build on more accurate perceptions that could mitigate ethno-political conflict within and between societies. By focusing on the constructed nature of identity not only is it possible to, as White (2008: 82) suggests, 'gain a better understanding of the way in which the Irish have defined their identity based on a national conceptualization of their archaeological, historical, and cultural past', according to postcolonial scholarship it should also elucidate a more accurate understanding of 'Irish' identity that is inclusive. Consequently, from this perspective, there are three main aspects that are focused on through the stages and discussions in order to explore the methodologies of national, community and individual representation, thus questioning the

maintenance of the mythopoeic aspects of 'Irish' national and local identity (Monahan, 2009: 217). These are,

1. questioning interpretations of the historical,
2. exploring national homogeneity/heterogeneity, and,
3. investigating essentialisms of identity.

2.3 The historical construction of 'Irish' national identity

The rapid transformation of Ireland, along with the pace and scale of fluctuating migration shifts, Ní Chonaill (2009: 48) would argue, have 'engendered notable dislocations of collective and personal identity. Home and belonging have become increasingly salient issues, a struggle to cultivate a place within a world/nation that is rapidly metamorphosing.' In part, it is for this reason that this thesis places prominence on the defining of a contemporary 'Irish' identity within a rapidly altering society.

Irish national identity relates to what are viewed to be identifiable traits of *Irishness*, which are intricately linked to perceptions of what is traditional (Marshall, 2000: 15). With regard to critiquing contemporary claims of a past Celtic civilization in Ireland, White (2008: 86) is supportive of the view 'that perceptions of ethnicity and identity are influenced by the context in which they are formed.' The notion of a common heritage is continually shifting with the recreation, restatement and reinterpretation of the nation so as to provide credibility for present-day claims of nationhood (White, 2008: 85). Yet this simplistic notion of *Irishness* rooted in homogeneity and upon which the national ideal of 'Irish' identity is founded, conflicts with historical accounts of a society that has come out of a melange of people through settlements, invasions, movement and migration. The Irish have, though not undisputed, an ancestry that has been traced back to the end of the last Ice Age, approximately 8000 – 6000 BCE. Such lineage is associated with the origins of the Celtic civilization of Western Europe rather than central Europe. Since the Neolithic period waves of immigrants from various geographical locations settled and contributed to the genetic variability of the Irish (White, 2008: 83).

Thus, it would seem that there is a contradiction between the cultural location of 'Irish' identity and its relationship to the historical epoch. Even more puzzling is that the construction of a 'prototypical' cultural identity in Ireland (Marshall, 2000: 16), which has led to the imagined notion of a homogeneous society, still persists against a backdrop of genetic and archaeological challenges to the origins of 'Irish' Celtic identity (White, 2008: 83*f.*). Such identification with a national ideal, in which the criteria of *Irishness* are restricted to somewhat mythological notions of homogeneity, has detrimental effects on the liberal nature of a society through the creation of cultural distinctions or boundaries of difference that are exclusionary.

O'Toole (2000: 22) refers to 'the governing Irish consensus' that persisted for most of the last century as 'a monolithic and static culture' with a degree of apparent homogeneity. The homogeneous nation was made of an 'old Irish identity based on Catholicism, nationalism and rural values' (O'Toole, 2000: 22). However within this, there have always been 'elusive ambiguities in Irish identity' which allow space to manoeuvre how the Irish define these terms and 'to re-imagine who "we" are' (O'Toole, 2000: 22). Marshall (2000: 16) refers to the construction of a stereotypical 'Irish' identity being founded on the entirety of main defining traits, those being: 'white', heterosexual, Irish speaking, Irish born, settled and Catholic.

This racialization of *Irishness* as a distinct identity seems to have stemmed from the historical experiences of both people from Ireland living abroad and those within Ireland who saw opportunity to advance through competing modes of social identification. Two distinguishable groups emerged, the Irish as emigrants who attempted to incorporate themselves as equals into a dominant 'white' Anglo culture, and the Irish as nationalists who attempted to detach themselves from a dominant Anglo culture. For both, the unifying characteristic, which had the potential to elevate the status of being Irish, was through the advancement of an 'Irish' identity filled with ambiguity (O'Toole, 2000: 26). The transition to a post-colonial Ireland saw those advocating an independent free-state utilize contrived notions of the nation to cultivate public defiance towards the imperial power at the time (White, 2008: 87). As O'Toole states, 'Irishness couldn't simply be transformed from black to white. It had to remain ambiguous'.

Although contemporary *Irishness* may be considered as ambiguous (O'Toole, 2000: 27), pre-contemporary 'Irish' identity was also reliant on ambiguity or distancing from reality, particularly in time. As De Paor (1979: 22) elaborates,

> when we ask if there has been a continuous and literally *identifiable* Irish identity, we confront this ambiguity – this evasiveness, this insistence by many Irish writers and nationalistic leaders that we in Ireland are not what we seem on the surface to be, but something else, older, wiser, truer; to be found not here and now but only in the past and in the future.

Modern 'Irish' identity is undeniably dependent on the recognition of a distinct identity formed from distinctive cultural traditions, religious affiliations, but also dependent on racial similarities. In fact, historically the ambiguity of 'Irish' identity lies within the ambiguity of a racial theory, developed on notions of racial superiority/inferiority. The main instance of this lies in the contradictory conception that the Irish, while being 'white', could also be cast as inferior. In truth, racial theory has always relied on ambiguous assumptions, and as O'Toole (2000: 27) comments, 'being white had nothing necessarily to do with skin colour'.

With the expansion of the 'British' monarchical empire, that can be seen to have been irredeemably assimilationist, within the early modern period the conquest of Ireland was envisioned to make sure that the people of Ireland would completely integrate into English civilization (Tovey *et al.*, 1989: 14; De Paor, 1979: 27*f.*). Nonetheless rather than a process of incorporation, Gaelic life and its institutions would be subjugated and condemned to inferiority to the British monarchic system of rule.

The preoccupation of English colonialism in Ireland was to thwart the decay of Englishness in Ireland, a concept that had been first articulated in 1297 (Crowley, 2005: 23). This raises another aspect of ambiguity whereby

> accompanying centralization there is also marginalisation; together with the idea of the legitimate language there is also the question of that which is excluded; for our purposes, along with an emergent sense of Englishness as a form of cultural identity, there is also the problem of Irishness in its various forms. It is this which lies at the heart of debates around 'degeneration'; the cultural and political identity and loyalty of the Old English, the New English and the Gaelic Irish…the triumph of the English language and the new forms

> of cultural identity that accompanied it were at one and the same time brash and insecure (Crowley, 2005: 29*f.*).

Furthermore, Crowley (2005: 32) reveals '…another aspect of the great fear, which haunts colonial rule at the time: cultural hybridity. He has an Irish name but we know many of the Old English took Gaelic names; he speaks English yet he does so with clearly Irish pronunciation'.

With the turning of the twentieth century emphasis on Celtic racial distinctiveness through the revival of Irish language, the development of a national literary movement and the codification of national sports created the foundation of the modern 'Irish' identity. The artificial construction of this Celtic identity was achieved through political myth making by Irish nationalists 'whose political aspirations could only be satiated by achieving complete independence from the British crown' (White, 2004: 325). Similarly Tovey *et al.* (1989: 18*f.*) corroborate, 'the nativism of the Gaelic League was rooted in origin myths which elevated the cultural and social residues surviving in the western islands and the Gaeltacht into the fountainhead for a new society.'

With Celtic revivalism came what is termed *national parallelism* which, in the Irish context, sought to de-anglicize Ireland while elevating Irish status from one of inferiority in comparison to the English (De Frëine, 1978: 51*f.*; Tovey *et al.*, 1989: 16; Kiberd, 1995: 265). Tovey *et al.* (1989: 16) make apparent that 'the clearest and strongest expression of this strategy of "national parallelism", it could be said, was the attempt of the Gaelic League to revive the Irish language as the counter of the language of the English nation.' Thus throughout Celtic revivalism, particularly in relation to language, ambivalence again becomes apparent in Irish society. It is suggested that in the wake of the Famine, the English language was necessary for effective emigration thus from a utilitarian perspective the Gaelic language could be discarded by those who emigrated while reproduced through cultural revivalism (Fanning, 2010: 400). Irish language was and continued to symbolize identity formation and national cohesion, while English remained for utilitarian functions (Tovey *et al.*, 1989: 23). According to Lee (1989: 665), following cultural revivalism it became evident that

a certain paradox was involved here. English was allegedly embraced as the reputed language of economic growth. When adequate growth failed to materialise, emigration became the alternative. Once again English was embraced as the reputed language of effective emigration. Thus both economic growth, and lack of economic growth, apparently encouraged the drift to English.

2.4 Nation building and essential *Irishness*

Nation-building inevitably shifted the emphasis of social reproduction from a cultural nationalist perspective towards a utilitarian liberalist perspective that focused on development and modernization (Fanning, 2010: 400). Aspects of nationalism that were seen to impede Irish economic development were eroded, and 'arguably developmentalism undermined the political salience of essentialist representations of Irish identity' (Fanning, 2010: 402). Nevertheless essentialist claims about 'Irish' identity generated by Irish nationalism managed to persist.

With Ireland's rapid socio-economic changes, the inherited basis of Celtic identity has had to be continually redefined and adapted (White, 2008: 89). The construction of a modern 'Irish' identity, defined by a narrow set of criteria, seems to have carved out a niche of self-recognition and self-assurance that masks its ambiguous foundation. Furthermore, such identity construction attempts to position itself, poised between the conflicting ideals of nation state and globalization, with the resultant effect being that 'the boundaries that structure Irish society are being remodelled. Some have dissolved, some have proved resilient to change, and some have crossed over each other melding or producing uneasy interfaces' (Peillon and Corcoran, 2004: 3).

What seems to be the case in contemporary Ireland is the emergence of a postmodern *Irishness* where 'Irish' identity has been renegotiated between the diametrically opposed ideals of the traditional and the global. In *Global Ireland: Same Difference*, Inglis (2008: 38) relies on the notion that Ireland has transformed quite suddenly 'from a homogenous type of white, English-speaking, Catholic society to one with a mix of race, ethnicities and religions.' Although the generalized view of a homogenous nation seems to reproduce, as has been contested, fixed and false notions of race and ethnicity, Inglis's view that *Irishness*, as it is perceived, has become more

varied with global flows and globalization may be accurate. Additionally, as Inglis (2008: 38*f.*) elaborates, '…the concept of glocalization helps us understand how these flows became integrated and adopted to Irish conditions.' According to O'Donovan (2009: 98) post-modern *Irishness* manifests itself as two processes of identity formation, which are referred to as 'regressive nationalism' and 'glocalization'. Glocalization is the process whereby societies negotiate the relationship and interchange between the local and the global (Robertson, 2001; Inglis, 2008; O'Donovan, 2009; Ritzer, 2011). With glocalization, as Inglis and Donnelly (2011: 129) suggest 'it may well be, then that local attachment and identity not only become adapted to globalization, but complement and sustain each other'. Yet, O'Donovan (2009: 100) also points out evidence that contemporary Ireland has adopted a regressive nationalist approach which 'can result in closed constructions of identity, often leading to xenophobic expressions of identity.'

Within the context of recent Irish history, spanning a timeframe from the early 1990s onwards, what becomes evident is a subtle shift towards reshaping the existent state through the establishment and prominence of what are deemed to be sufficient market freedoms under neoliberalism, while deemphasising the historical. Again what seems to be a blatant utilitarian approach is taken mirroring what Foucault refers to in his Lecture on February 14th, 1979 ("La naissance de la biopolitique") as *Ordo-liberalism* (Lemke, 2001: 5*ff.*), as described below. In parallel with post-war Germany, Ireland has more recently shifted social policy to possess the primary function of inhibiting any anti-competitive mechanisms that capitalist society could produce. Such promotion of neo-liberal competitiveness is being achieved through 'the universalization of the entrepreneurial form, and the re-definition of law' (Lemke, 2001: 5). This is whereby, according to Grewal and Purdy (2014: 5), the affirmative use of political power has seen the restructuring of law and social life along market lines, from labour relations to educational institutions to the professions generally. Similarly for Ireland, as historicized with Germany, 'a new notion of time asserts itself, organized no longer in historical but in economic categories. Hence it no longer entails notions of historical progress but instead economic growth…' (Lemke, 2001: 5). If a by-product for Germany was the ability to forget and annul German history, for Ireland the by-product could easily be assumed to be the capacity to overcome obsessions of historical colonial oppression and potentially help defuse more recent

sectarian conflict, but, with such a shift of the nation state's focus and trajectory, the categorical question to ask would be: what may have been neglected?

Legitimating the Irish state with reference to economic growth rather than by defining it in terms of an historical mission may have resulted in neglect of adequately interrogating identity constructions. With such neglect, along with the globalized economic predicament Ireland has recently struggled through, having not fully attained 'a form of sovereignty limited to guaranteeing economic activity' (Lemke, 2001: 6), arguments may well revert to a mythological narrative that is partial and closed-minded, leading to anti-immigrant sentiment. It is for this reason that further investigating identity constructions within such an era of liquid modernity may well prove an important avenue for examination in relation to the amelioration of the social dilemmas of our time.

According to White (2008: 90) there is evidence of an association between nationalism and anti-immigrant sentiment. As O'Brien (1971: 8) writes, in *Nationalism and the reconquest of Ireland,*

> even under the most benign definitions of nationalism, much more is subsumed than simple affection for one's fellow citizens, and one's native place. Collective selfishness is there, aggression, and the legitimation of persecution, with at the back of it all, the old doctrine of the superiority of one's own nation, the Herrenvolf, on whatever scale of values, whether of triumph or of suffering, the Volk may rest its assumed superiority.

The materialization of this regressive reformulation of 'Irish' identity was evident when the Irish electorate, voting in the 2004 ICR, opted to repeal the constitutional provision that automatically granted birthright citizenship to all children born within the state (O'Donovan, 2009: 101). This was seen as 'a fundamental philosophical shift in Irish law from the principle of citizenship based on birth within the territory to citizenship based on blood descent from the citizenry' (Mancini and Finlay, 2008: 577). Over a similar timeframe populist politics also sought to marginalize refugees and asylum seekers with the implementation of oppressive provisions that further

segregated people through dispersion to Direct Provision centres and forbidding opportunity for employment.[19]

Alongside this is the process of 'glocalization' which makes the assumption that communities have agency in selectively controlling the interaction between the global and the local whereby the homogenization/heterogenization of culture is geographically specific (O'Donovan, 2009: 103*f.*). Irish society attempts to be inclusive of foreign investment and foreign labour where necessitated, while creating boundaries that are exclusive or limiting on access and integration of 'other' peoples and cultures that might perturb the imagined homogeneity of contemporary 'Irish' identity.

When unveiled, 'regressive nationalism' and the notion of 'glocalization' become implements by which an unprincipled utilitarian approach to Irish developmental (post)modernity is achieved. It juxtaposes a modern 'Irish' identity that endorses 'developmental modernity' where, according to Fanning (2010: 410), 'competitive corporatist national interest' towards immigration has prevailed against an ethno-nationalist protectionist approach. Either way, when both are framed exclusively from an *Ordo-liberal* perspective (as introduced above), society overly focuses on the economics of material gain irrespective of the means by which this is achieved.[20]

Conversely however, within both, beneficial aspects can be derived which allow for progress that more adequately supports the aspirations of the development of an egalitarian and democratic society and the supposed ideals of the Irish nation. 'Good' governance, for example, could prioritize equitable wealth distribution and more

[19] As documented by the state's Reception and Integration Agency (RIA, 2011) officially 'Direct provision is a means of meeting the basic needs of food and shelter for asylum seekers directly while their claims for refugee status are being processed rather than through full cash payments. Direct provision commenced on 10 April, 2000 from which time asylum seekers have received full board accommodation and personal allowances of €19.10 per adult and €9.60 per child per week.' The RIA (2011) continues by stating that no RIA staff are present at the centres, 'However, from time to time, RIA staff visit the centres to ensure that asylum seekers needs are being met and to ensure that they have access to all the relevant services.'

[20] An example of the application of an Ordo-liberal perspective can be seen with the increased privatisation of property. Under such a doctrine, this can be seen to function both to exacerbate inequality by elevating cost and thus access through the purchasing for leasing by consortiums and vulture capitalists, as well as re-homogenizing and re-securing the status quo hierarchy whereby property privatisation is equated with nationalist identification. As Goldberg (2009: 332) comments, 'Where the welfare state, with all its contradictions and failings, produced a modicum of social egalitarianism, the neoliberal state exacerbates inequality, further privileging the already privileged.'

inclusive rules of belonging, as well as allowing for a melange of both developmental and cultural attributes that seek the progressive development of a modernising society.

The collective social identity of a nation such as Ireland can be seen as labile, in perpetual alteration and being influenced from the global and local or macro and micro. Given the conflation of nation and state and its dependency on and role in 'Irish' identity formation, critical to its perpetuation are governance and control of the inclusion/exclusion, categorization and stratification of hierarchies of identification (Ní Chonaill, 2009: 51). Thus, against the backdrop of supranational governance and globalization the state can be seen in constant confrontation, scrambling to define the national 'Irish' identity as a means of population control, to manage ethnic diversity and preserve the imagined homogeneity of the Irish nation (Ní Chonaill, 2009: 51; O'Donovan, 2009; Fanning, 2002). However, for the state preoccupied with order, 'heterogeneity is marked as a problem or a pathology' and homogeneity is seen as 'a kind of idée fixe; it is a driving force in the construction of a cohesive social identity and moral community, in modern state formation, in the racialized post-modern city' (Giroux, 2006: 40). Globalization is embraced for its economic benefits as it simultaneously vies with the nation state's hold on identity formation. Through migration, it brings with it heterogeneity which David Theo Goldberg describes in an interview with Giroux (2006: 42) as a 'natural drive':

> Trying to de-anchor the question of belonging…it's not just that condition of stasis, of being with; it has to do also with a romantic imaginary that is not bound by "being." This then drives the curious to the unknown, to engage with those you're not expected to engage with, and so on.

In contrast, modernity and the development of the nation state into a modern governmentality by seeking 'the project of ordered governance,' became dependent on the propagation of racial self-definitions as the classification and ordering method by which to define and differentiate each nation state as distinct. Thus, for David Theo Goldberg, the construction of a national identity that relies on homogeneity is fundamentally and 'deeply unnatural' (Giroux, 2006: 43).

2.5 The dilemmas of the post-national nation state

Indispensable for any society that purports to be democratic are structures and mechanisms that allow for broad definitions of identity that are inclusive and labile. As White (2008: 89) states, 'Irish identity is not transferred genetically. It has been created in the past and is constantly being modified and changed by those who identify themselves as Irish today'. Therefore, unless identity is constructed with complete homogeneity, interpreted as unanimously identical amongst the members of a society and maintained within complete isolation geographically, then temporally society could be perceived as somewhat predetermined. However, notwithstanding the effects of generational changes and the accepted fact that all humans are unique individuals, this is an inconceivable possibility, even within contemporary twenty-first century Ireland or amongst humanity globally. As Parekh (2000: 122) points out, cultures are 'unique human creations that reconstitute and give different meaning and orientation to those properties that all human beings share…and give rise to different kinds of human beings'.

Thus, definitions of identity that are static will conflict with the natural progression of any labile society. If mechanisms are not in place that counter the subjugation of a given minority and the inability to freely self-identify, inequitable power relations occur. Restricting the freedom to self-constitute creates and perpetuates inequalities, which is diametrically opposed to the supposed ambitions and aspirations of an egalitarian social democratic state. It is plausible to view such a restrictive and narrow mode of identification, which exerts tension on society, as a flaw of democracy and as such, a society that preserves an exclusionary approach to identification as a flawed democracy.

Equally, 'the problem with liberal multiculturalism is not only that is fails to deal with issues of unequal power and resources, but that it is based on an essentialist concept of identity' (Finlay, 2004: 140). Another issue with liberal multiculturalism is that it relies on the notion of tolerance but is somewhat blind to the interplay between tolerance and power, particularly the tolerating agent's superior position of power. From the perspective of the tolerant proxy, Goldberg (2009: 157) provides an explanatory description as, 'I have the power and position to tolerate you. I am active; you are passive, powerless to affect me in my tolerating save to get under my skin,

make me even less accepting of your distinction. My social power to tolerate turns on all those like me likewise disposed towards you.' Both through the reliance on essentialisms and through the process of tolerance, power becomes inequitably shared, which conflicts with the ideals of a supposed multicultural and liberal democracy, thus it becomes self-contradictory.

According to Joppke (2007: 39), globalization brings with it a deficiency of national identity, which leads to a lack of sense of citizenship, or membership of the state. The apparently tolerant state responds by creating levels of citizenship statuses and re-tightening of access. However, (as similarly remarked by an interviewee from the Preliminary Phase, regarding normative legislation conflicting with values of minority groups), it becomes paradoxical or in Orwellian terms, "doublethink" as, 'the space for the re-nationalization of citizenship is limited by norms of equality and non-discrimination, which allow only universalistic answers to the question of identity' (Joppke, 2007: 39). According to Joppke (2007: 44) 'states can no longer impose substantive identity as a pre-condition for acquiring citizenship.' In parallel with this the contemporary liberal state becomes bound by maintaining an ostensibly neutral stance towards the multitude of different peoples. Again, the unity of such a society is only possible if the society remains universalistic. Thus, paradoxically, unity under such a social order, can only be exclusionary unless global or planetary (Joppke, 2007: 45). To counterbalance this and justify nation state based liberal ideals, 'deep contradictions within liberalism emerge when confronted by migration, which mean that, in practice, liberalism often stops at the border…' (Anderson, 2013: 11; Cole, 2000).

When unravelling issues relating to border formations such as taking into account security and migrant subjectivities, Latham (2010: 190) proposes that,

> What is unique about border agents and the border itself – the external as well as the internal borders – is the salience and scope of what is being secured: access to a social space in its entirety rather than admission to any discrete, limited institutional space or right to use specific resources. This matters especially because what can be denied to migrants at the border is the potential for a broad range of agency and mobility once inside a national space –

however restricted this agency may be because of internal policing and social and political exclusions.

This relates to the contradiction within liberalist ideology and highlights that ultimately, at the official point of access, it is exactly here that discretion rules over reason and it is at this point where control is wielded whereas, once having being granted access into the jurisdiction, supposed liberal logic and reason are implemented through laws and systems of justice. As Latham (2010: 185) argues perhaps in order to overcome such a liberalist predicament 'a multiversal understanding of societies' is required as well as a leaning towards creating policies that encompass concepts such as *flexible citizenship* (Ong 1993; 1998).[21]

Latham (2010: 187) reveals that the framing of the state/society/territory complex, which we associate with the Westphalian polity, is organized in accordance with assumptions of a perhaps dated 'single citizenship state-society.' Under such conditions, incorporation occurs whereby migrants are expected to become subsumed either temporarily or with permanency into 'a part of the constellation of social and political spaces we more conveniently but problematically call a national society' (Latham, 2010: 186). However, the compounded problem that arises relates to individual's subjectivities which may not neatly fit decisively into designation or sorting, such as, race, religion, class and disposition (Latham, 2010: 188). This brings us back again to the issue of national identity or perhaps, from a more sociological perspective, it relates to 'identity systems that read deeply into your body and life, which…' according to Latham (2010: 189), '…is consistent with the official hermeneutic of the social fabric.'

[21] Ong (1993, 1998) denotes flexible citizenship to be a form of citizenship chosen by individuals based on primarily on their own perceived economic needs rather than more social based citizenship such as association with community or the sharing of political rights. It relies on flexible strategies that the individual deploys so as to maximise their position in an era of global capitalism. Ong (1993: 770) coins the term to describe Overseas Chinese who opportunistically 'search for citizenship abroad that will facilitate their strategies of flexible (financial) accumulation and their attempts to evade political costs and debits of minority entrepreneurs in Western countries.'

2.6 Cosmopolitanism as the solution?

One solution that may be viewed as a directionality to overcome such a dated system of single or dual citizenship state-society might be based on cosmopolitan standards. Nonetheless, contradictions associated with universalistic orientations may also be present in relation to the concept of cosmopolitanism and may be relational to Martha Nussbaum's understanding of the implications of such a conception. For Nussbaum (1996: 4), cosmopolitanism is simply an allegiance to 'the worldwide community of human beings'. This cosmopolitan view towards a worldwide community, rather than national identity, is according to Nussbaum (1996: 74) 'more adequate to our situation in the contemporary world.'[22] Scheffler (2002: 114) expands on this by detailing that at the core, cosmopolitanism centres on the notion of reciprocity between each individual, as a citizen of the world, and their relationship with the global community of which they are a part and to which they thus owe allegiance. The natural progression of such a conceptual understanding is that it represents the 'acknowledgement of some notion of common humanity that translates ethically into an idea of shared or common moral duties towards others by virtue of this humanity' (Lu, 2000: 245; Brown, 2011). Further to this, Brown (2011: 53) explains that, 'explicit within cosmopolitanism's ethical orientation is a concern for global justice with the expansion of corresponding moral duties which can broaden the scope and responsibilities of justice to include those beyond state borders.' Scheffler (2002: 114) dichotomizes cosmopolitanism into being relevant to justice and culture:

> For the cosmopolitan about justice, the idea of world citizenship means that the norms of justice must ultimately be seen as governing the relations of all human beings to each other, and not merely as applying within individual societies or bounded groups of other kinds. For the cosmopolitan about culture, meanwhile, the idea of world citizenship means that individuals have the capacity to flourish by forging idiosyncratic identities from heterogeneous cultural sources, and are not to be thought of as constituted or defined by ascriptive ties to a particular culture, community, or tradition.

[22] Within Brown and Held's (2010: 155) book, *The Cosmopolitan Reader*, they note that Nussbaum's views on the topic of cosmopolitanism and specifically patriotism have since changed in significant ways. They refer to Nussbaum's (2008) work entitled 'Toward a Globally Sensitive Patriotism.'

However a dilemma which unfolds, though this should not be seen to detract from the overarching tenets associated with cosmopolitanism, relates to the commitment to devoting attention to people at a familial level, community level and national level, in contrast to the commitment to equality, above and beyond all, including prevalence over the nation. As Scheffler (2002: 118) points out, with an accentuation of cosmopolitanism, it may be interpreted as 'simply the inevitable consequence of a serious commitment to equality' and as such taking a staunch Cosmopolitan perspective means the rejection of the nationalist proposition 'that the members of an individual society owe each other some things, as a matter of justice, that they do not owe to non-members' (Scheffler, 2002: 118). This relies on a binary understanding of cosmopolitanism that is in direct conflict with, and juxtaposed against, Nationalism. As Brown (2011: 54) explains, cosmopolitans such as Nussbaum, Tan and Waldron, 'often contend that traditional conceptualizations of the state are inappropriately insular and that statist defences regarding the protection of culture, nationality and national patriotism ignore pressing issues of common humanity and planetary coexistence.'

With such an association, what then becomes inherent in the concept of cosmopolitanism is that it denies 'adherence to the values and traditions of a particular community…and accordingly, is not inclined to treat an individual's relationship to a particular cultural community as a potential source of special responsibilities' (Scheffler, 2002: 116). Thus, cosmopolitanism is supposedly more representative of a viable way of contemporary life that prioritizes egalitarian values superseding the national and that this can only be achieved effectively through the rejection of specific community or national values. Similarly, for MacIntyre (1994), partiality towards one's nation in the form of patriotism creates the same predicament. However, having historical bonds and connections to a community justifies the virtue of patriotism, whereby MacIntyre (1994: 312) deduces,

> *If* first of all it is the case that I can only apprehend the rules of morality in the version in which they are incarnated in some specific community; and *if* second it is the case that the justification of morality must be in terms of particular goods enjoyed within the life of particular communities; and *if* third it is the case that I am characteristically brought into being and maintained as a moral agent only through the particular kind of moral sustenance afforded by

> my community, *then* it is clear that deprived of this community, I am unlikely to flourish as a moral agent. Hence, my allegiance to the community and what it requires of me – even to the point of requiring me to die to sustain its life – could not meaningfully be counterpoised to what morality required of me.

This *morality of patriotism* which recognises that there are 'underived special responsibilities to the members of one's own community' is considered by Scheffler (2002: 119) as utterly incompatible with the devotion to cosmopolitan notions of the equal worth of persons.

Conflicting with this perspective is the Kantian view that the national is a delusion whereby people view their own nation as inherently superior to 'others' (Kleingeld, 2003: 299). An interpretation of Kant's work by Kleingeld (2003) is used to elevate and propound the compatibility of cosmopolitanism and patriotism. If, as according to Kant in his work on *Toward Perpetual Peace*, one can be a 'citizen of a supersensible world' (Kant, 1795: 323) then this would imply that all rational beings belong to a single moral community regardless of their nationality, religion, customs, and so on (Kleingeld, 2003: 301). [23] Further to this, Kant refers to cosmopolitan law (*Weltbürgerrecht*) based on the maxim of benevolence, resulting in beneficence that transcends any boundaries. Kleingeld (2003: 302) describes the Kantian logic as being, 'according to cosmopolitan law, states and individuals have the right to attempt to establish relations with other states and their citizens, but not a right to enter foreign territory' (Kleingeld, 2003: 302). Continuing in reference to *Toward Perpetual Peace*, written in 1795, Kant is shown to describe that 'strangers have the right to "hospitality," which is the right "not to be treated with hostility because of [their] arrival on someone else's soil"' (Kleingeld, 2003: 302). Equally too, cosmopolitan law would strongly criticize (neo-)colonialist practices. The basis for this is because Kant sees the essence of republicanism – freedom, equality and independence – as being a source, rather than a hindrance, towards realising cosmopolitan ideals. According to Kleingeld's (2003: 304) interpretation of Kant, true patriotism or at least,

> Civic patriotism does not imply the notion of a nation in an ethnic sense. Thus, it is not in principle (conceptually) impossible to give up one's citizenship in

[23] Presumably in this context 'beings' refer to humans, however, if one were to consider rational beings beyond humans, this would also be compatible with posthumanism.

> one state in favor of that in another, although it depends on immigration and emigration laws whether it is a real option.

This reasoning would seem to at least partially overcome the paradoxical juxtaposition between egalitarianism and ownership. Civic patriotism within the virtues of cosmopolitanism hints towards more favourable conditions being entrusted to all in relation to mobility, hybridity and citizenship transference according to affiliation.

Although recognising that the socially constructed elements of an individuals' values, attitudes and behaviours may contradict notions of liberal universalism that are considered transhistorical, MacIntyre's (1994: 312) argument, as quoted above, rests on the assumption that the community described is fixed, it inhibits any logical deduction of the development of community at a global level or the transformation of a community over time or even the transformation of a person's loyalty temporally. If community was to be conceived as singular, at the global level, then that could provide reason and justification for universal ideals even from a subjective perspective. In a way, the advancement towards a global comprehension of specific moralities would lead to a level of what could be termed pseudo-objectivity. This could be interpreted as a state of universalism, through the amalgamation of subjectivities along the same alignment. The conundrum would be, if such were to require a homogenization of an array of cultural relativities, would this go against the very ideals of liberalist thinking? Obviously, to affirm universalist assumptions would let the liberalist off the hook, whereas cultural relativism forces the liberalist to think beyond multiculturalism.

The reconciliation then is not the complete rejection of either but a fusion of both liberalism and multiculturalism in the form of interculturalism. Interculturalism means that cultural relativism is not only recognised as constituent to what is universal, it is in essence universal for the liberalist. Similarly, pitching cosmopolitanism against nationalism omits a notion of complementarity that may exist, whereby the community or nation may endorse and place weight on egalitarian principles that are practically analogous to the hypothetical universal ideals of cosmopolitanism. In fact Scheffler (2002: 118) acknowledges that one may have a sense of responsibility to family and community and that this can occur concurrently

with concern for the greater good of humanity. Accordingly, Scheffler (2002: 118) admits 'it is, therefore, not at all apparent why a commitment to equality should be thought incompatible with a recognition of underived special responsibilities.'

As Fossum (2012) suggests, supplementing Kantian cosmopolitan patriotism, a progressive nation does not necessarily require functioning which is in conflict with cosmopolitanism ideology and importantly harmony can be achieved through inclusive modes of governance. Fossum (2012: 337) substantiates the argument that potentially not only might the supranational provide for cosmopolitanism, but potentially, although it 'appears as the least likely candidate for cosmopolitan vanguard', the nation state may well be compatible with cosmopolitanism as 'State-based democratic constitutionalism is, after all, founded on a set of universal principles' (Fossum, 2012; Habermas, 1996). In contrast, Brown (2011: 54) contends that 'many cosmopolitans have seen the state more as an inconvenience to work around than an empirical background condition that needs to be thoroughly worked in.' Brown (2011: 54) not only finds that cosmopolitan theory renders the state morally and empirically ineffectual but also, makes ambiguous the normative role states could play in developing a cosmopolitan order.

Leading on from this is the consideration of the mergence of nation and state in becoming a singular nation-state. Appiah (1998) deduces from a social constructivist perspective, that the state is perhaps a more predetermined notion than that of the nation, helps distinguish one from 'the other'. Appiah's (1998: 96) contention is that liberalism's emphasis on the state could be justifiable. Appiah (1998: 96) maintains,

> Because human beings live in political orders narrower than the species, and because it is within those political orders that questions of public right and wrong are largely argued out and decided, the fact of my being a fellow citizen of yours – someone who is a member of the same order – is not morally arbitrary at all… it is exactly because the cultural variability that cosmopolitanism celebrates [and] has come to depend on the existence of a plurality of states that we need to take states seriously…Nations matter morally, when they do, in other words, for the same reason that football and opera matter: as things desired by autonomous agents, whose autonomous

> desires we ought to acknowledge and take account of, even if we cannot always accede to them.

In contrast, Appiah (1998: 96) contends,

> States, on the other hand, matter morally intrinsically; they matter not because people care about them, but because they regulate our lives through forms of coercion that will always require moral justification. State institutions matter both because they are necessary to so many modern human purposes and because they have such great potential for abuse.

Quite simply put by Brown (2011: 55), 'In other words, whether we like it or not, we currently live in a world largely dominated by states and if cosmopolitan theory is to have greater pertinence, then it is prudent to engage better with the state and to offer reasonable ideas about bringing the state back into cosmopolitanism.

These arguments indicate that the obstacle for either the cosmopolitan or liberal nationalist is the exclusivist propensity of the nation state. Such a propensity towards being restrictive is consistently seen as based on the need for preserving national distinctness and homogeneity, rather than, a nation state that is post-national and promotes communities of inclusion (Fossum, 2012: 337). The current order of such nation states thus seems bound in a type of circular logic whereby preserving homogeneity requires an exclusivist propensity which gives the nation state predisposition towards notions of a homogeneous collectivity. Such a tautological argument provides not only for the exclusion of the potential for change but it confines any understanding of the assumed homogeneous nation state as innately un-falsifiable. Yet the composition of the nation state is never static and in fact such supposed notions of homogeneity may well be fallible. Not only does this tautological justification for the overbearing nation state that is reliant on exclusive modes of citizenship regimes precisely link back to the notion of a 'flawed' democracy, as stated above, it sheds light on the significance of identity formations.

Appiah (1998: 97) claims that, by viewing cosmopolitanism as liberalism, cosmopolitanism can be reduced to the fundamental belief that 'the freedom to create oneself – the freedom that liberalism celebrates – requires a range of socially transmitted options from which to invent what we have come to call our identities.' For Appiah (1998: 98), identities are both ascribed and are open to manipulation and

reshaping both from within the self and externally. It is through language that the subject contemplates their identity and it is language that acts as catalyst in the shaping of new individualities.

In a way the notion of a *post-national nation state* unfolds a predicament not only in terminology but in its very production, which may relate to the inability of the nation state to recognise and fully uphold the universality of human rights when concerned with the individual as an autonomous being, or, as Fossum (2012: 337) emphasizes, 'the ultimate unit of concern' for the nation state. This is because such concern would suggest universality in the association of biopower attained by the nation state from any given individual equally. Nonetheless, the quandary would be, how can the nation state provide for all the individuals of the world equally and conversely, how can all the individuals of the world provide reciprocation to one nation state that is not global? Furthermore, the very biopower acquired by one nation state that is not global cannot be universal because if it were, such a scenario would equate to a diminishing of its very own authority. This could not be the case, unless of course, it were operating extrajudicial power which would go against the very ideological foundations of cosmopolitanism, as such power would manifest disproportionately. Equally, the dilemma created relates to the paradox of maintaining democratically legitimate states, with liberal policies committed to the idea of an inclusive community, while simultaneously placing central the autonomy of the individual. This progresses towards the post-national civic-state that is reliant on inclusivity,[24] and in turn implies an onus away from *jus sanguinis* citizenship acquisition, to the contrary of the outcomes of the 2004 ICR.

2.7 Evidence of an egalitarian perspective within the pilot study

What was evident at the heart of the discussions from the Preliminary Phase was a certain degree of what Joppke (2007: 45) terms, 'replicas of the self-same idiom of liberal democracy: freedom, equality, tolerance, and so on.' Narratives from the discussions, on the one hand, seemed cautious of multiculturalism as a method of integration, equally tended to focus on the universality of the ideals of a contemporary

[24] For more on the liberal state or civic state, please refer to works by Will Kymlicka and Yael Tamir, such as Tamir's (1993) book entitled, *Liberal Nationalism.*

(neo)-liberal nation state, as perceived for Ireland. However, apart from the contribution from one participant who had migrated to Ireland from Eastern Europe within the past 10 years, what was omitted within these discussions was an acknowledgement of the broader circumstance whereby Ireland may be seen as consistently being lowered into a supranational level of European governance. In juxtaposition to this is the nation state's use of citizenship and collective identity constructs to create hierarchies, which in turn produce inequitable civic relations amongst the internal population. Most participants from the Preliminary Phase idealized Irish society as remaining universalistic, which was evidenced from their opinions on the criteria for citizenship. Participant' conclusions on the criteria for citizenship were shown to better complement anti-essentialist notions of identity and more contemporary notions of culture as a contested process.[25] This view on citizenship conflicted with participants' views on Irish identity. This suggests a blatant perceived difference between being Irish and being an Irish citizen amongst participants from the Preliminary Phase.

Nevertheless, although the recognition of identity formation focused at the micro-level of society, the general influence of European unity on identity was barely raised as an issue, contentious or otherwise. This also relates to what was most neglected from discourse concerning the paradoxical aspect of the contemporary liberal state situated within the globalizing world, namely the acceptance of Eurocentric exclusions that perpetuate disproportionate access to resources, labour and property at a broader global level.

Theory, which complements some findings from the discourse within the pilot study, implies a sense of core 'Irish' identity rooted within a collective identity linked with inherited communal culture as proposed by the Freudian psychologist, Eric Erikson (Finlay, 2007: 337). In what Finlay describes as the reconciliation of liberalism to cultural pluralism/multiculturalism,

[25] The discrepancy between the outcomes of the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum and participants' opinions on the criteria for Irish citizenship was emphasized in the Preliminary Phase. Furthermore the racialization of state and institutional policy was evidenced. Participants' sense of uncertainty and lack of self-understanding is made comprehensible not only as a benign feature of postmodernity, but also as a characteristic that is susceptible to manipulation from unequal power relations within society. An example of such provided was in relation to the public and media discourse leading up to the 2004 ICR.

> Erikson regarded identity as inextricably bound up with the communal culture. In an abidingly influential formulation he reduces individual identity to communal identity: identity was "a process located in the core of the individual and yet also in the core of his communal culture, a process which establishes…the identity of those identities" (Erikson, 1968: 22).

However, what was found to be perceived by participants of a "central core", "subconscious level that exists in every Irish people", "a sort of lineage" or "aura" is inconsistent with current concepts of culture. Instead being similar to parity of esteem, 'it is an essentialist concept of culture as an unchanging way of life or primordial inheritance of a people or group' (Finlay, 2007: 337). Such perceptions of identity are contrary to the concepts of identity that are non-essentialist, strategic and positional.

The results from the Preliminary Phase are supportive of the theory discussed above, which introduced the proposition of a third space in which cultures and communities are socially constructed juxtaposed against essentialist notions of identity that are fixed. Yet, the notion of cultural traits as inheritable, 'fixed, solid almost biological' (Gilroy, 1987: 39) contradictorily maintains that 'cultural membership is thus virtually synonymous with ethnicity. [Therefore] the principal community attachments which define peoples and their identities are "ethnic"; ethnic communities are defined by their cultures' (Grillo, 2003: 160). Adding to this, in relation to the concept of an underlying cultural essentialism, Faas (2010: 12) states, 'arguably, in terms of hybridity, cultures are still "anchored in territorial ideas", whereby cultural essentialism is implicitly reinforced by being the norm to which hybridity is the exception'.

According to Parekh (2000: 153) culture is truly void of fundamental nature, thus it is 'not a passive inheritance but an active process of creating meaning '. However, 'human beings are neither determined by the culture, nor are they transcendental beings whose inner core or basic nature remains wholly unaffected by it' (Parekh, 2000: 158). As Finlay (2007: 342) states, 'Culture can no longer be understood simply as the inherited way of life of a group or a people; rather it is better understood as symbolic practice, a contested process through which we attach meaning to our lives and our world'. Conversely, Finlay (2007: 342) points out that essentialism forbids

‘individuals to dissent or exit from their communities of origin’, thus restricting individuals from self-constitution.

On the one hand, the conflicting philosophies reiterate the centrality of ‘ambivalence’ in the process of identification. Hall (1996: 3) discusses the psychoanalytic use of identification in relation to Freud by describing it as ‘grounded in fantasy, in projection and idealization’. However, the discussions from the pilot study also indicate assumptions similar to what Hall (1996: 4) describes as the authentic self-concealed within other, more superficial identities which are held in common with people of a similar ancestry and collective history, and which create the perceived sense of fixity within ‘an unchanging oneness.’ What is recognised by Freudian theory is that ‘identification means first of all trying to realize inadmissible desires’ (Benoist, 2004: 19). Yet nor is any individual ‘merely a blank slate upon whom are inscribed the codes of culture, a kind of Lockean *tabula rasa* in latter-day Foucaultian garb’ (Benhabib 1992: 217).

Either way this paradoxical argument is somewhat extraneous. What is more pertinent to this overall thesis is the notion of self-consciousness or the effect of power on the alienation of human realization through mythological formations of essentialist rationalizations that are inscribed through social constructivism; that is to say, assuming identities are socially constructed implies that they are written relying on previous texts and dependent on assumptions that may have originated from fallacies, which intentionally or not results in dispelling power from the individual. This is because ‘man is an incarnated being, a subject-of-the-world, who cannot be removed from his context’ (Benoist, 2004: 27). Thus, freedom rests less in the ability to opt out of the group and more on the ability of self-constitution and of shaping the directionality of the community, imagined or otherwise, to which one supposedly belongs. Consequently self-constitution can be either inclusionary, or as is more often the case, exclusionary of ‘outsiders’ who may want to enter and be a part of this society as equals. Ergo, restricting members of a public, through hierarchical modes of access, is not only restricting the freedom of those who are excluded, it is conceding the individual ‘infinite right of subjectivity’ (Žižek, 1999: 93) of all members within the said group. As Bhaskar (1975: 109) states, ‘agents are particulars which are the centres of powers… [and are] simply anything which is capable of bringing about a change in something (including itself)’.

Within the context of fluid modernity and with it flows of migration, from an egalitarian perspective this is why it is crucial to seek inclusive modes of citizenship that are hospitable to difference. Such theoretical considerations are the foundational justification and provide potency to the ethical imperative of such knowledge acquisition as is sought in this research. Furthermore, an egalitarian perspective is realized as applied to the methodological design, as detailed in chapter four.

The opening two chapters provide an overview of the central considerations in relation to both perceived notions of identity, specifically *Irishness*, and in relation to national identity, conceptions of political organization, such as the nation state, cosmopolitism, regionalism and so forth. Importantly neither concepts of identity nor the nation state are portrayed as static but rather deduced as social constructs. From here the attention is then drawn towards how social constructs such as identity and *Irishness*, which in actuality are abstract, become entrenched and embedded in reality. Thus, specifically the subsequent chapter exposes the formation of identity and *Irishness* in both the more tangible and concrete sense, through legislation and governance, as well as through socio-psychological processes, such as manipulation via media misrepresentation and publicized elite, yet falsified discourse. By interrelating the theory presented heretofore with specific legislative and policy changes, in addition to proven fabrications that influence the conscience of the populous, the third chapter closes with the argument for progressive self-constitution.

Subsequent to this, the introductory two chapters, which present the theoretical foundations that frame the overall thesis, are specifically interrelated to the findings chapters (Chapters five to nine). Although the theoretical review argued heretofore informs the general construction and directionality of analysis, it is not imposed onto the findings. Instead, consistencies and incongruities along general themes are shown to emerge from the data obtained. Somewhat iteratively, such findings are then related back to the theory contended hitherto, which together is combined to provide the basis for deliberation and the construction of inferences in the concluding section, Chapter ten.

3 Legislation, Myth & Progressive Self-constitution

This section places the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum and its outcomes within the context of the Irish nation state, as it has evolved into its contemporary condition. Theoretical considerations are made that draw from the discrepancy between the outcomes of the 2004 ICR and the foundational ideology of the purported democratic republic of Ireland.

The racialization of state and institutional policy is further evidenced. Following this, participants' sense of uncertainty and lack of self-understanding are made comprehensible not only as a benign feature of modernity, but also as a characteristic that is susceptible to manipulation from unequal power relations within society. An example of such is provided in relation to the public and media discourse leading up to the 2004 ICR. The Irish Citizenship Referendum in 2004 and its outcomes are theorized as an illogical political shift in constricting the definition of *what it is to be Irish*, which contradictorily is juxtaposed with the embracing of supranational European Union governance by the Irish state.

The dilemma relating to participants' perceptions of identity as inherent within Universalist thought is discussed to form the critique of a democracy based on liberal multiculturalism. At this point, conclusions made by participants from the Preliminary Phase on the criteria for citizenship are shown to better complement anti-essentialist notions of identity and more contemporary notions of culture as a contested process.

Drawing from participants' assumptions and relating them to the antithetical stance taken by the government provide the basis for the current change in perception of citizenship acquisition. From this, it is then posited that *jus sanguinis* citizenship could in fact be interpreted as a relic of colonial subordination/'otherness'.

In conclusion, the logicality and rational foundation of contemporary society are debated and contested to illustrate the underlying requirement to resist knowledge/power formulations that prioritize the subjectification of identity. Foucault's notion of self-constitutionality is seen as a prerequisite force in

overcoming power that attempts to influence the 'reflexive conscience' of members of a community as a counterbalance to power that thrives on the propagation of notions of the collective in essentialist and exclusionary terms.

3.1 *Jus sanguinis* legislation and the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum

From an historical perspective it is unambiguous that *jus sanguinis* citizenship is a conception of the monarchical system of acquisition, which granted sovereignty over all conceived in the territory based on bloodline descent. According to Honohan (2010: 2), 'origins in many countries [of *jus sanguinis* citizenship] lie in a legacy of British law…' or common law. In contrast the origin of *jus soli* citizenship, irrespective of ethnicity, is quintessentially republican, centring round civic participation. Similarly Lentin (2009, 6) asserts that, 'The term "nation" derives from nascere (to be born), thus the passage from divinely authorized royal sovereignty to national sovereignty means that in the transformation of "subject" into "citizen", birth – or bare natural life as such – becomes the immediate bearer of sovereignty.' This change in citizenship criteria can be viewed as a progression from more traditional notions of feudal allegiance towards socialization, and links with Foucaultian theory of the development of the modern nation state. In the case of Ireland what has continued, to some degree since the late nineteenth Century, is the notion that 'Irish no less than European nationalism all distinguished, to some extent, the 'true' Germans, French, English or Irish from lesser peoples and races, through sectarianism, anti-Semitism or colonial ideologies of racial superiority…' (Fanning and Mutwarasibo, 2007: 449). Supplementing this, contemporary racializations of *Irishness* have their historical antecedents in references to belonging, ideological descriptions of a monocultural and homogenous Ireland, and other such nationalist ethnocentrisms (Fanning and Mutwarasibo, 2007: 450).

The twenty-seventh Amendment of the Constitution Act 2004 entitled, *Irish citizenship of children of non-national parents*, was passed on the 24th June 2004. It fundamentally affects Article two of the Irish Constitution under the heading of The Nation. Article two declares,

> It is the entitlement and birthright of every person born in the Island of Ireland, which includes its islands and seas, to be part of the Irish Nation. That

> is also the entitlement of all persons otherwise qualified in accordance with law to be citizens of Ireland. Furthermore, the Irish nation cherishes its special affinity with people of Irish ancestry living abroad who share its cultural identity and heritage.

The 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum, with the signing of the twenty-seventh Amendment (as quoted above), revised the last example of unrestricted birthright citizenship, *jus soli*, among the members of European Union nations (Mancini and Finlay, 2008: 575). During its introduction by the Irish government at that time it 'was accompanied by a populist politics that emphasized distinctions between "nationals" and "non-nationals"' (Fanning, 2010: 395). Viewed from a manifest perspective of exclusion, this can be seen as the creation of obstacles to citizenship for those without a hereditary connection to the nation. Delving into it deeper it can be revealed as 'the changing of the rules of belonging in Ireland' (Moriarty, 2006: 132) with the establishment of identity and notions of *Irishness* being based on bloodline descent.

The passing of the Irish Citizenship Referendum in 2004 meant the amendment of Article nine of the Irish Constitution, under the heading of The State, with the insertion of a new section stating,

> 2 1° Notwithstanding any other provision of this Constitution, a person born in the island of Ireland, which includes its islands and seas, who does not have, at the time of the birth of that person, at least one parent who is an Irish citizen or entitled to be an Irish citizen is not entitled to Irish citizenship or nationality, unless provided for by law.
>
> 2° This section shall not apply to persons born before the date of the enactment of this section

Essentially such an amendment meant the removal of the provision for protection of guaranteed citizenship to all Irish-born children, including those born to economic immigrants and asylum seekers, and instead placed citizenship within the national legislative realm. The implications are that birthright citizenship is now determined at the discretion of the Justice Minister operating under a government mandate and is no longer a constitutional right. The creation of such a barrier to citizenship for persons without any blood descent in Ireland contradicts universalistic notions of a national republic and creates a new hierarchical order within the state. From a broader

perspective, differentiated access to citizenship maintains economic inequality both within and between countries. Furthermore, for Ireland this restrictive access works 'to limit temporal and ethnic change in the composition of "the Irish Nation"' (Mancini & Finlay, 2008: 576).

Within the timeframe of the constitutional vote, when Ireland's economy was proliferating and the country had become a net in-migration nation, the assumption might have been that with the expansion of the EU eastwards, Ireland wished to create restrictions to citizenship as a control mechanism to curb the provision of state welfare to new arrivals. However, the constitutional change was inconsequential to children born of European parents or the parents themselves as labour migrants who, under EU law, would have been and are lawfully entitled to such provisions. Furthermore, it cannot be seen as a state mechanism to curtail immigration as with retrospection, the European Migration Network report reiterates that, '…it was after the 2004 EU enlargement that immigration reached unprecedented levels, peaking at 109,500 in the year to April 2007' (Quinn 2010, IX). Instead, it would seem to have been blatantly introduced to target the restriction of access to citizenship to those beyond the European zone, such as asylum seekers, illegal workers and non-EU immigrants. Even during the so-called unprecedented peak levels in 2007, according to the figures provided by the OECD (2010, 212), people from developing regions beyond the EU constituted less than 10 percent of all immigrants or less than 1 percent of the total population of the Irish republic.

The onus on the attainment of citizenship biasing *jus sanguinis* based criteria rather than both *jus soli* and *jus sanguinis* criteria can then be seen as an increased restriction on accessing EU citizenship, vis-à-vis Irish citizenship, to people beyond Europe while conversely acting as a discursive expansion on 'the notion of "the Irish nation" in bloodline terms' (Lentin 2007, 434). Thus, the 2004 ICR, which was hastily proposed and passed, can be viewed on a supranational level as an apparent requirement to harmonize or converge with legislation of other EU states (Moriarty 2006, 168; Garner 2007, 439). At the very least, the Irish citizenship referendum in 2004, occurring within a similar timeframe to changes in employment legislation and

EU expansion and mobility,[26] is suggestive of a more managed approach to immigration nationally, complementary to EU driven policies. Nonetheless, in all conceivable instances there seems to be on the one hand, the fabrication and perpetuation of a national identity that is based on nationhood, while contradictorily there is the development of the post-colonial Irish nation state within the context of supranational European Union governance.

In general, when citizenship acquisition is analysed within a comparative European framework, it could be argued that Ireland is at the more liberal end of the spectrum of a nominally diverse range of nation-state policies. For instance, although it has not been empirically proven in the context of Ireland, a cursory comparison would suggest that with the passing of the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum, Ireland has followed suit in the reversal trend towards more restrictive, differential citizenship in conjunction with the Netherlands, Britain and France (Koopmans *et al.*: 73, 2005; Bauböck *et al.*, 2006: 23; Joppke, 2007: 41), but that Irish policies still emphasize a more culturally pluralist/multiculturalist conception of citizenship in contrast to countries such as Germany and Switzerland. However such comparative analysis becomes a somewhat frivolous argument when debating the complementariness of *jus sanguinis*/*jus soli* based citizenship legislation with egalitarian socio-democratic ideologies. Although Ireland's legislation on citizenship acquisition is comparably liberal, at the level of the nation state the constitutional change is a regressive step and highlights an inconsistency between Irish nation state governance ideologies and transnational governance practices.

3.2 Mythological representations of *Irishness*

Within a discussion from the Preliminary Phase, two participants raised the issue of mythological concepts of what they had perceived as reality and what they now

[26] The Equality Act 2004 was enacted in July 2004 under the auspices of implementing the principle of equal treatment for men and women, irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions. In relation to mobility, on the 29th April 2004, Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council was drafted with an overarching focus on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States. Within the same period, on the 1st May 2004, ten new countries joined the EU; the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia.

understand as authenticity. This may uphold the notion that historically contrived identities (as elaborated in the section 2.3, The historical construction of the Irish national identity), were socially constructed by manipulative elites to emotionally affect citizenry and maintain power. However, it may also provide a subtle indication of the current functioning role of the state and other institutions in the maintenance of the status quo through the representation of *Irishness*, as much as, 'Otherness'. Brandi (2007) & Garner (2007) independently allude to the role political and public discourse played in shaping perceptions prior to the 2004 ICR and to the creation of such misconceptions. In a critical analysis of discourse, Brandi (2007: 40) holds that the Irish government, in a strategic manoeuvre, successfully constructed a process of ideological naturalization. In the analysis of primary texts and speeches, Brandi's (2007: 26) thesis propounds

> A strategic ideological manipulation and reframing of events taking place throughout the texts, by resorting to the recurrent use of specific discursive strategies. The demonisation of "non-national" pregnant mothers and the polarisation of immigrants into two distinct categories of good deserving and bad undeserving ones emerge with clear evidence from the analysed texts. Hence, the impact of [then Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform] McDowell's pronouncements in the reproduction and reinforcement of popular racism is stressed.

For example, within the months leading to the election debate concerning the 'loophole', both state ministers, in particular Minister McDowell, and hospital Masters/managers presented the argument for constitutional change. The argument's justification based on alleged claims of numbers of foreign women placing strain on the Irish maternity system are now seen as baseless as they are, 'clearly unsubstantiated by any statistics…[although] repeatedly referred to by supporters of the "Yes" vote throughout the 90-day campaign' (Garner, 2007: 440).

This seems to support findings from the Preliminary Phase, where the participants' sense of identification is conveyed as being consistently manipulated. However, what could also be inferred from the narrative of the discussions from the pilot study is that the participants' perceptions are in a state of flux. On the one hand, this is suggestive of the recognition of the mutability of identity in postmodernity, while on the other, it

is indicative of a state of anxiety or disorientation within societal constructs. The latter aspect may be more symbolic of the historical ambiguity associated with 'Irish' identity (O'Toole, 2000: 26), as well as the 'struggle to cultivate a place within a world/nation that is rapidly metamorphosing' (Ní Chonaill, 2009: 48). However, the former aspect may be indicative of altering or transformative understandings of the self and identity producing more dynamic and anti-essentialist conceptions of identity. This would complement later responses, which focus on the criteria for citizenship as being desire, love and respect.

An obvious conclusion from the Preliminary Phase is an appeal for the reassessment of the outcomes of the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum within the public sphere, but also to devise a contemporary form of citizenship that complements the aspirations of an egalitarian socio-democratic nation such as Ireland. The difficulty, as Kiberd (2000: 630) alludes to, is the question 'where is the lawyer who can offer a constitutional definition of identity as open rather than fixed, as a process rather than a conclusion?' It is this conundrum, and its associated constituents that inform, inspire and feed into the development of the main stage of the research conducted.

3.3 The 2009 Habitual Residence Condition (HRC) amendment

Within the same timeframe, and predictably in direct conjunction, 2004 also saw the initial introduction of new social welfare legislation, namely, the statutory Habitual Residence Condition (as amended in 2009). As Free Legal Advice Centres (FLAC, 2009: 1) summarizes,

> The Habitual Residence Condition is a qualifying condition for social welfare payments which was introduced on 1st May 2004 in response to EU enlargement. All persons seeking social welfare payments after that date have been required to satisfy this condition.

The HRC places restriction on certain social welfare benefits through the requirement of a person seeking certain benefits to be habitually resident in the State of Ireland at the time of making the application for said benefits (Pavee Point, 2011: 3). It is intended to ensure that only persons, Irish and non-Irish citizens alike, who have been living in Ireland for a certain period of time, could qualify for social welfare payments

(FLAC, 2009: 1). However, according to O'Reilly (2013: 138) from its introduction up until 2009, in a blanket fashion 'the view taken generally was that an asylum seeker by definition could not satisfy the HRC and thus could not be paid social welfare.' In fact, to prevent any ambiguity in the exclusion of any person in the asylum/protection/leave to remain classifications, new *Guidelines for Deciding Officers* (2008) issued by the Irish Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA) stated in paragraph 6.3, 'An asylum-seeker… cannot satisfy either the habitual residence condition or the normal residence condition for any DSFA payments' (FLAC, 2009: 2).

In late 2009, from a more optimistic perspective for individuals seeking asylum, FLAC (2009: 3) notes that, following cases which had been raised contesting the guidelines, the Chief Appeals Officer of the Irish DSFA stated that,

> I do not believe there was any intention in framing the [HRC] legislation to exclude a particular category (such as asylum/protection seekers) from access to social welfare benefits. If there was any such intention the relevant legislative provisions would have reflected that intention and removed any doubt on the issue.

In allowing the appeals of five asylum seekers living in Direct Provision (DP), the Chief Appeals Officer of the time made it clear that the statutory HRC provision could, in certain instances, be satisfied by an asylum seeker (O'Reilly, 2013: 138). That is to say, the former Chief Social Welfare Appeals Officer, 'held that there was no blanket prohibition on asylum seekers and other persons within the leave to remain or subsidiary protection processes receiving social welfare payments' (Pavee Point, 2011: 7; FLAC, 2010: 7).

What would seem contrary to the statement made above, and occurred at a superior level of governance, was the subsequent decision to amend social welfare law. Specifically this relates to Section 15 (Amendment to section 246 of Principal Act.) of the Social Welfare and Pensions (No. 2) Act 2009 which categorically states that, '(8) For the purpose of this Act, where a person – (a) is given a declaration that he or she is a refugee under section 17 of the Act of 1996… he or she shall not be regarded as being habitually resident in the State', for any period before the date on which he or she is granted permission to enter and remain in the State. In essence, this amendment

sets out clearly that for refugee seekers, entitlement to being considered habitually resident within the asylum process, shall not be considered and this automatically removes any prerogative to such a claimant for social welfare entitlements.

Several years later, In the Department of Social Protection (DSP, 2012) Guidelines for Deciding Officers on the determination of Habitual Residence 2012, in section 7 entitled "Who is habitually resident?" it details:

> An asylum seeker is a person who has applied to the Minister for Justice and Equality for recognition as a refugee in accordance with the *Refugee Act 1996*, and whose application has not yet been determined. *Section 246(7) of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005* provides that such a person shall not be regarded as habitually resident. *Subsection (7)* also excludes those whose application has been refused and those who are subject to a deportation order.

It continues to outline the procedure to be taken where permission to remain has been granted to individuals and clearly indicates through reiteration that 'habitual residence can only be granted with effect from the date permission to remain is given' (DSP, 2012). In the appendix, under the section entitled Refugees, they are defined as,

> …people who have sought asylum, and have been granted Refugee status by the Minister for Justice and Equality (*Section 17 of the Refugee Act 1996*), having left their country of origin and are unwilling to return there for fear of persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion of membership of a social group. People granted refugee status by the Minister for Justice and Equality are granted permission to remain in the State.

Again, the following section restates 'Those granted refugee status in Ireland can only be regarded as habitually resident from the date of grant of that status, provided they have lived continuously in the State since then, and cannot be treated as habitually resident for any time before that' (DSP, 2012).

According to the *Submission on the HRC to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Social Protection* made by FLAC (2010: 5), the previously mentioned Section 15 amendment can be seen to have 'excluded [~~a~~] certain groups from being able to satisfy the HRC including people in the asylum, leave to remain or subsidiary protection processes.' Instead asylum seekers are refused Social Welfare rights 'on

the basis of the Habitual Residence Condition no matter how long they have been living in Ireland which can often be for a period of years' (FLAC, 2010: 7). In further support of this, the NGO Coalition (2011) Briefing Paper on the Immigration, Residence and Protection (IRB) Bill 2010 raises key shortcomings and highlights the issue of protracted deferments in not only asylum decision making processes but also in general immigration processes. Although at the time, 'Among the provisions included in the new Bill…is the fast-tracking of asylum procedures and appeals' (The Irish Times, 2010), the NGO Coalition (2011: 1) Briefing paper on the IRB Bill 2010 argues the contrary by stating that, with the ratification of such primary legislation

> Ireland's immigration system is based on the issuing of temporary residence permits, many granted at the discretion of the Minister for Justice, without clearly defined rules or rights. Lack of clear rules and decision-making based on discretion creates the conditions under which applications can take years, literally, to process. Ireland's protection system is also fraught with lengthy delays in decision-making and lack of transparency. The result is costly and inefficient immigration and protection systems that can cause enormous hardship for the people involved. Lack of transparency in the immigration and asylum decision-making processes has created an overreliance on the courts for adjudication.

So the point is reached whereby not only is it argued that 'asylum seekers are living in poverty over a sustained period of time as a matter of state policy' (Conlan, 2013), but also people who are awaiting a decision on their immigration status are excluded from social assistance rights as a matter of law. The double pronged effect, through state maintained impoverishment, is seen to intentionally preclude and marginalize asylum seekers from participating within the society in which they live and are destined to spend at least a portion of their lives (Conlan, 2013; O'Reilly, 2013).[27]

[27] O'Reilly (2013: 138*ff.*) argues that the 2009 HRC amendment, provides 'that a person who does not have a right to reside in the state cannot be habitually resident here and that asylum seekers cannot be habitually resident in the state', is a regressive step in legislation as it echoes the Poor Law of 1838. In the same article, Frank Cluskey the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Social Welfare is quoted to have said in the Dáil in 1975 that "The poor law was the legal embodiment of the attitudes of the last century, harsh and unfeeling attitudes which should have no place in the society of today."

3.4 The 2015 International Protection Act (IPA)

The current state of affairs has seen the enactment of the International Protection Bill of 2015. According to the Irish Refugee Council (IRC, 2015a: 1) the supposed principal objective of the new International Protection Act 2015,[28] is to introduce a "single procedure" in which applications for refugee status (UN Convention on Refugees) and for subsidiary protection (under the Qualification Directive of the Common European Asylum System) are assessed in one protection claim (IRC, 2015a: 1; EMN, 2015; Citizens Information, 2016). This single procedure system is generally seen as a positive step and such changes had been recommended in the past by organizations such as the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC, 2015: 3) and IRC (2015a: 1). Nonetheless, with the new exclusive application procedure, if the application is refused, only a single appeal can be made via a newly established International Protection Appeal Tribunal (IPAT). If both applications for protection are refused under the new act, consideration of additional issues may be reflected on by the Minister for Justice. Under the Refugee Act 1996 (as amended with the Immigration Act 1999), a separate application for leave to remain was only considered by the Minister under the repatriation unit. Further to this, the concern of the Law Society of Ireland (LSI, 2015: 6) committee is that 'there seems to be no appeal mechanism following refusal of a leave to remain application'.[29]

Of utmost importance, particularly for an island state such as Ireland, are procedures for initial access and reception. The new IPA 2015 legislation means that Ireland 'has opted out of the Reception Conditions Directive and the Recast Reception Conditions Directive,[30] both of which establish minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers' (IHREC, 2015: 6). The IHREC (2015: 6) continues to detail the new requirements in contrast to the Direct Provision system that is maintained under the IPA 2015:

> …the Recast Reception Conditions Directive requires that reception conditions should not impair the private or family life of asylum seekers, that families should be housed together as far as possible, that asylum seekers

[28] Hereafter, Number 66 of 2015: International Protection Act is referred to interchangeably with IPA 2015.
[29] Henceforward, Law Society of Ireland is referred to interchangeably as LSI.
[30] 'Council Directive 2003/9/EC of 27th January 2003 laying down minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers' (IHREC, 2015: 6).

> should have an adequate standard of living, that they are protected from violence and from threats of their physical and mental health, and that they have access to healthcare.[31]

Thus apparent is the fact that the IPA 2015 legislation falls short of the minimum EU standards, as well as best practice standards as advocated by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), against the recommendations of relevant organizations such as the IHREC and LSI. This failure is specific to the maintenance of the contentious Direct Provision system currently established.

Another shortcoming relates to the legal right to gainful employment. The IHREC (2015: 6) report continues by describing that the same directive 'specifically requires that asylum seekers be granted a limited right to work where in the first instance decisions have not been made within nine months.'[32] Under the section entitled, *Permission to enter and remain in the State*, Part 1, Section 16(3), 'Subject to subsection (6),[33] an applicant shall – (b) not seek, enter or be in employment or engage for gain of any business, trade or profession' (IPA, 2015: 20). It would seem that under subsection (6) a person granted refugee status or subsidiary protection is entitled to gainful employment, nonetheless a person in the international protection procedure is not entitled to employment for the duration of the procedure. A void in the act also means that potential victims of trafficking are precluded from employment, unless they are deemed to be a qualified person of refugee status or subsidiary protection.

The exception to the above with regard to employment, is in relation to Temporary Protection, Part 9, Section 60(2) where, 'a displaced person to whom, following a Council Decision under Article 5 of the Council Directive establishing the existence of a mass influx of displaced persons, permission to enter and remain in the State for temporary protection as part of a group of persons has been given by the Government or the Minister and whose personal data… are entered in a register established and

[31] 'Directive 2013/33/EU, Articles 7.1, 12 and 17-19' (IHREC, 2015: 6).
[32] 'Directive 2013/33/EU, Article 15' (IHREC, 2015: 6).
[33] Section 16, subsection 6 states that Section 16(3)(b) shall not apply to those where under the report of examination of application, 'The recommendation of the international protection officer in relation to the application shall be based on the examination of the application and shall be that – (b) the application should not be given a refugee declaration and should be given a subsidiary protection declaration, [Section 39(3)(b) as accorded under Section 2(3)], or appeals under section 41(1)(a) against the recommendation of subsidiary protection but is not approved (IPA, 2015).

maintained for the purposes of this section by the Minister' (IPA, 2015: 65). In such an instance, a displaced person is able 'to seek and enter employment, to engage in any business, trade or profession and to have access to education and training in the State in the like manner and to the like extent in all respects as an Irish citizen' (IPA, 2015: 66). However, the required European Council agreement on the Temporary Protection (TP) Directive has not been applied since its enactment in European Union law. Thus, displaced persons who should ordinarily be entitled to benefit from the TP Directive are unable to avail of its legal underwriting.

A third noteworthy deficiency however, in the IPA 2015 legislation, relates to the best interests of the child. The Children's Rights Alliance (CRA, 2015) in a report submitted in May 2015 recommended that the then Bill, 'should provide that the best interests principle be a primary consideration in all substantive decisions relating to the protection determination, including the identification of unaccompanied minors and deportation orders' (CRA, 2015: 4). Similarly, the IRC (2015b: 7) stipulates the supporting argument that a new provision be included reflecting the overarching obligation to respect the rights of the child as declared within in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It even goes so far as to make specifically recommended alterations to the bill, which were disregarded and not adopted in the bills enactment.[34]

Correspondingly, a submission made by Women's Aid (WA, 2015) expressly recommended that within the Bill to be enacted, there should be the inclusion of particular reference to domestic violence. In addition, provisions should be made whereby in the instance that a person ceases to qualify as a family member, through the cessation of marriage, civil partnership or otherwise and has experienced domestic violence, they should not forfeit eligibility to remain in the country or lose access to work if entered into the international protection process (WA, 2015: 6). Under the Act (IPA, 2015) no reference is made to victims of domestic violence, thus, in the circumstance that it may occur, no specific provisions have been made available.[35]

[34] The Irish Refugee Council recommended that *Situation of Vulnerable Persons*, Section 57(2), should not have no stipulations and should ensure the Act in its entirety state that, '**this act** in relation to a child under the age of 18 years, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration' (IRC, 2015b: 8).

[35] Although not explicitly cited in the legislation, domestic violence can still be interpreted through the definition of persecution in the Act.

Preceding its passing into law, the International Protection Bill (IPB), as it was referred to then, was described as having major inadequacies by many independent organizations, yet most concerns seem to have been disregarded by the state. Similar to what is detailed above, organizations such as The Irish Refugee Council, the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and Children's Rights Alliance highlighted major shortcomings in the new law, particularly in relation to Direct Provision conditions, access to work, education and training, best interests of the child and the protection of women from acts of persecution.

For instance, the Law Society of Ireland demanded that 'a full impact assessment must be carried out in order to determine the exact implications of and consequences of repealing the Refugee Act 1996' (LSI, 2015: 6). The new International Protection Act now repeals and replaces Irish law regarding the status determination of asylum claims which had been set down in the Refugee Act, 1996 (as amended).[36] Before, in the first instance, under sections 6, 8, 11 and 13 of the Refugee Act 1996 (as amended) an asylum claim would have been determined by the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner (ORAC). Granted under sections 15 and 16 of the same act, it was also the case that an asylum seeker would have been able to appeal a negative determination through the Refugee Appeals Tribunal (RAT). As detailed by Cosgrave and Thornton (2015: 172), Ireland is bound by the EU's Procedure's Directive[37] which

> sets down minimum standards for assessing and deciding upon the granting of refugee status only. This includes minimum standards accessing status of determination procedures; guarantees as regards assessment of asylum applications; rights of interview and the principles relevant to assessing an asylum application.

According to the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) the aim of the then proposed legislation that would supplant the Refugee Act 1996 (as amended),

[36] The IHREC (2015: 5) also details how the IPA 2015 repeals and replaces European Communities (Eligibility for Protection) Regulations 2006 and European Communities (Asylum Procedures) 2011 (SI No. 51 of 2011) legislation.

[37] 'Council Directive 2005/85/EC of 1 December 2005 on minimum standards on procedures in Member States for granting and withdrawing refugee status [2005] OJ L.326/13. These minimum standards do not apply to applicants for subsidiary protection, however, for Ireland, now see: Eligibility for Protection Regulations 2013 (n 52), brought about by the decision in *M.M. v Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform* [2013] IEHC 9 (23 January 2013)' (Cosgrave and Thornton, 2015: 172)

'is to reform law relating to the system for the determination of applications for refugee subsidiary protection, and to give further effect to a range of European Union Directives'[38] (IHREC, 2015: 2).

Even prior to the release of the International Protection Bill in 2015, several bodies and organizations prepared reports and made submissions and recommendations. On 8th May of 2015 the Law Society of Ireland made a submission on the general scheme of the International Protection Bill emphasising 'the broader legal setting of this proposed legislation – that Ireland is bound to implement its international human rights obligations under the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees' (LSI, 2015: 5). The report also recalled that although Ireland is not directly bound by all the common standards as set out by the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), 'Ireland should be guided by these European standards and should view them as minimum standards of legal protection which ought to be adhered to in any proposed legal system of international protection' (LSI, 2015: 5).[39]

Although the LSI (2015: 6) committee expressed concerns regarding the abolition of the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner (ORAC) and submitted the opinion that the body should be kept and its independence guaranteed, according to the Refugee Applications Commissioner, Costello (2016: 3), the office is to be subsumed back into the Department of Justice and Equality within an independent framework contained in the International Protection Act, 2015. This is a palpable transfer of powers to the department of Justice and although the claim is that it will, as stated immediately above, operate within an autonomous framework, essentially it lessens its independence from the body responsible for the enforcement of immigration controls. In addition, responsibility for the removal of a person from the Irish state on foot of a Deportation Order lies with the same state department (IRCa, 2015: 3). What is most troubling is the lack of independent oversight this creates overall. To add to this what becomes apparent is that the International Protection Act 2015 was rushed through at the end of year 2015 with disregard towards the

[38] 'Council Directive 2004/83/EC (Asylum Qualification Directive), Council Directive 2005/85/EC (Asylum Procedures Directive) and Council Directive 2001/55/EC (Temporary Protection Directive)' (IHREC, 2015: 2)

[39] In addition, the LSI (2015) details issues pertaining to family reunification, employment, and so forth.

recommendations made by independent organizations such as the Irish Refugee Council and the Law Society of Ireland.

Returning to what was discussed earlier in the section entitled 2.3 The historical construction of 'Irish' national identity not only is the IPA 2015 evidence of regressive nationalist tendencies within legislative realms it is, inadvertently or not, a form of techno-legal tool that complies with Lemke's thesis of *Ordo-Liberalism*. Directly following the section pertaining to the regressive nature of the 2009 HRC amendment, O'Reilly (2013) makes reference to the current Irish President Michael D. Higgins who

> reflected on the divide between the economy and society and how the interests of the economy have taken precedence over the interests of society. President Higgins remarked at the launch of Up the Republic on 13th November 2012 by pronouncing that "Economy and society need to be reconnected through a shared sense of ethics and values that both operate in the same moral universe".

Higgins is critiquing in contemporary Irish society what has become a blatant and perplexing encounter between liberal economic ideals and regressive sentiments that combine to produce *Ordo-Liberalist* tendencies.

3.5 A relic of colonial subordination/'Otherness'

As stated above, in closing off the section entitled 3.1 *Jus sanguinis* legislation and the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum, with the benefit of retrospection, in 2004 the referendum on Irish citizenship is seen as having been hurriedly pushed through. At a supranational level it may be indicative of an apparent requirement to converge with the laws of other EU states laws (Moriarty, 2006: 168; Garner, 2007: 439). In addition, suggestive of the racialization of state policy, the introduction of nationality laws can be seen to directly affect only parents that are asylum-seekers and economic migrants from developing world nations who attempt to claim residence rights through having an Irish born child, a supposed 'loophole' in Irish legislation (Garner, 2007: 439). As Finlay (2004: 340) states, 'leaving the "Irish Granny rule" intact gives substance to the allegation of racism'. However, this thesis aims to assess if the

legislative changes coincided with perceptions from the general public or if it was more indicative of institutionalized administrative racism, through the required process of immigration, and the expansion of the racial state. At the very least, the 2004 ICR is not only symptomatic of unbalanced power relations, it is indicative of a regressive self-understanding.

Further to this, what becomes evident is that theoretically, the shift to *jus sanguinis* citizenship from 2004 in Ireland is less representative of supposed liberal rationale; as Honohan (2010: 1) points out the term 'liberal' ought to denote policies that are non-discriminatory and inclusive, and specifically stresses the importance of the consideration that '*Jus soli* broadly constitutes a 'liberal' mode of access to citizenship'. Thus, in contradiction to what Honohan (2010: 1) refers to as a 'liberalizing trend' amongst other nations over the past two decades, Ireland, through the constitutional amendment on citizenship, would seem to be taking regressive steps towards defining nationhood, where perceptions of *Irishness* within members of the group are based on theoretically inaccurate and superficial notions of intrinsic inheritance. False perceptions are conceived from essentialist notions of the other and illusions of difference rather than the recognition of commonality. Anxiety is driven by fabricated perceptions and this promotes submission to the racialization of the Irish nation state.

This theorization is more indicative of neo-colonialism, which, under the guise of neoliberalism, is a continuation of intentional, unidirectional colonial power. In an attempt to ground theory to some sort of authenticity, specifically with regard to the case of Ireland, this colonial power does not necessarily manifest itself within traditional notions of territorial acquisition; rather it manifests itself primarily in two intertwining ways.

First, it is manifested through the legislature and policies of Ireland, as a sovereign nation state, with regard to its citizenship harmonization and its compliance within neo-liberalist policies of the European Union, which operates mechanisms of equality and inclusion internally, while stringently controlling access through exclusionary mechanisms for those beyond its borders (Fanning and Mutwarasibo, 2007: 446; Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992: 41). Although the expected result of neoliberal ideology would suggest a unidirectional shift in governance away from the state and

onto the level of society, thus resulting in a reduction or limitation of governance, according to Lemke (2001: 11*ff*.) the prevalence and importance of the state has not diminished and that,

> On the contrary, the state in the neo-liberal model not only retains its traditional functions, but also takes on new tasks and functions. The neo-liberal forms of government feature not only direct intervention by means of empowered and specialized state apparatuses, but also characteristically develop indirect techniques for leading and controlling individuals without at the same time being responsible for them.

Similarly, Goldberg (2009: 333) argues that the state is not dismantled under neoliberalism but instead is remade to become the centre of control and management of demographics with the shifting modalities of movement. Neoliberalism demands the reduction of taxation on the wealthiest and corporations, together with, tightening social welfare commitments such as subsidized education, healthcare and pensions. In conjunction with this the institutions of the neoliberalizing state invest in repressive apparatuses of control and policing of the public and beyond. Such repressive state functionalities are seen to include the police, military, prisons, homeland security, border control and so on (Goldberg, 2009: 333).

As Benhabib (2004: 13) states, though more suggestive of a benign directionality of governance, 'the EU is caught in contradictory currents which move it towards norms of cosmopolitan justice in the treatment of those who are within its boundaries, while leading it to act in accordance with outmoded Westphalian conceptions of unbridled sovereignty toward those who are on the outside'. That 'the negotiation between insider and outsider status has become tense and almost warlike' (Benhabib, 2004: 13), for Benhabib seems to be an inadvertent phenomenon. However, it could be viewed more insidiously as a mechanism of the colonizer in the representation of 'Otherness', which subsequently plays a major role in elucidating transhistorical problems of identity or difference and account for a dominant configuration of knowledge/power. The state administration, by selectively according rights and entitlements to subjects defined through their racialized categorizations, is intentionally contriving mechanisms that are antiquated in a supposed postmodern technocratic age that is based on the universality of logic and reason. In creating this

discretionary power, the state is restricting equal access to the territorially circumscribed nation state.

Historically, as Hardt and Negri (2000, xii) describe, when making the distinction between 'imperialism' and what they attempt to coin in their thesis, 'Empire',

> The sovereignty of the nation-state was the cornerstone of the imperialisms that European powers constructed throughout the modern era…The boundaries defined by the modern system of nation-states were fundamental to European colonialism and economic expansion: the territorial boundaries of the nation delimited the center of power from which rule was exerted over external foreign territories through a system of channels and barriers that alternately facilitated and obstructed the flows of production and circulation.

However, what this thesis would like to consider is that within more contemporary configurations of power, colonialism is still present in its reconstructed form and it is not so alien, or not as 'altogether different from "imperialism"' as Hardt and Negri (2000) would have us to believe. Hardt and Negri (2000) initially base their overall argument of 'Empire' on a decentralized location of power at the level of the global, which would seem overly ideological and represent a transition towards effective multipolarity. What is postulated is that 'The passage to Empire emerges from the twilight of modern sovereignty. In contrast to imperialism, Empire establishes no territorial center of power and does not rely on fixed boundaries or barriers.'

Hardt and Negri (2000: xii) make the assertion that, 'It is a decentered and deterritorializing apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global realm within its open, expanding frontiers' and with clouded idealism that somehow defines "Empire" as an all-encompassing, authoritative yet benevolent force '…Empire manages hybrid identities, flexible hierarchies, and plural exchanges through modulating networks of command. The distinct national colors of the imperialist map of the world have emerged and blended in the imperial global rainbow.'[40] If such a nonthreatening interpretation of the current directionality of globalization were the case it might be heartening from a Lockean humanist

[40] This thesis finds it more fitting to describe current trends within the European context as simply, 'the maturation of the new imperial design' (Hardt and Negri, 2000: 246) that is reliant on a globalized disciplinary regime. Rather than a complete paradigm shift leading to "Empire", though perhaps "Empire" may well be apt in describing the end game scenario as envisaged by an elitist few, what is now visible on the global stage is neo-imperialism.

perspective. However, this thesis would like to advance the claim that, what can be observed is merely a transition towards neo-colonialism primarily benefiting core countries or cosmopolitan cities of power and influence globally while maintaining structures of usurpation.

Thus what this thesis would suggest as the second manifestation of power, intrinsically interdependent on the first, and in which Ireland is also complicit, is the continuation of intentional, unidirectional neo-colonial power operating at a supranational level of governance (such as in the EU), particularly its reliance on global financial hegemony, including disproportionate access to resources, labour and property.[41]

From the macro perspective it is this power of neo-colonial capitalism interconnected with neoliberal nation state governance which is a core deliberation of this thesis. An example of such macro processes interplaying with more micro level organization is evidenced in Ireland's acceptance of Eurocentric institutional racisms. Such institutional racism relies on transhistorical processes of ontological obsession and falsity within discourse and these may have been the main drivers behind the regressive changes in Irish citizenship. In other words, if racist categorization can be conceived, it may not necessarily exist and if narratives are told, they may not necessarily be fact. With the European Union new categorizations of inclusion/exclusion have been created. Without being overly simplistic and 'pretending that immigration is simply the result of poverty and the acts of individual immigrants' (Sassen, 2005: 36), when it clearly is more complex which Sassen attests, it is still important to recognise, as Mancini and Finlay (2008: 11) conclude, that often immigrants,

> are the ones whose livelihoods in their home countries are compromised by inequitable trade relations, among other factors, and who come to *our* wealthy countries only to be exploited under *our* inequitable civic relations.[42]

[41] This aspect of property relates to both physical ownership of property, and also the notion of 'Citizenship as Inherited Property' as theorized by Shachar and Hirschl (2007). Shachar and Hirschl (2007: 275) point out 'that the analogy between inherited property and birthright citizenship permits us to see the latter in the light of the former: as a carefully regulated system for limiting access to scarce resources to those that "naturally" belong within its bounds as the heirs – not of "one's body" – but of the *body politick* itself.'

[42] Emphasis in italics added.

Although as Sassen (2005: 37) suggests migration 'flows are bounded in time and space and are conditional on other processes; they are not mass invasions or indiscriminate flows from poverty to wealth', it is exactly the fact that they are bounded in economic and power-driven conditionalities which is at the heart of mobility. These inequitable power relations remain persistent between and amongst nation states.

To be more specific, in relation to the association between affluence and mobility, Latham (2010: 191) points out that migrants 'face a precarious positionality in a racialized and gendered global political economy, exacerbated through securitized citizenship regimes regulating access to prosperous zones through mechanisms of subsumption.' If subsumption is understood as, at the disposition of the state, the granting to a person the choice to either assimilate or integrate into the said state then an individual's access to capital, financial, intellectual (training), and social (family) become vital resources and bargaining chips in the negotiation process (Latham, 2010: 21).

Positing such a theorization on the second manifestation, namely that of unidirectional transnational power, would also seem to complement Ahmad's (1992: 192) reference to the potential of elites acting within a 'global offensive of the Right, global retreat of the Left, and retreat also of that which was progressive even in our canonical nationalism'. This may apply to Ireland and its placement within, 'the unprecedented imperialist consolidations of the present decade' (Ahmad, 1992: 192). Ireland, be it explicit or not, has taken an assimilationist approach to supranational governance by adopting *jus sanguinis* based citizenship. This would seem to facilitate, what Chandler (2010: 150) refers to as a 'façade democracy' in reference to the promotion of external policies, in the name of 'good governance', but with the resultant effects of excluding liberal rights. Although Chandler's reference is with regard to external intervention it could also be applicable to an array of incremental processes towards harmonization, including exclusionary controls on people from beyond the European zone. To this effect, Ireland would seem all too keen to pursue a conceptualization of Eurocentric neoliberalism, relying on frameworks that may not in reality be inherently liberal**.** The removal of birthright citizenship would seem contradictory to the notion of liberal democracy that is dependent on the civic-republican 'ideal of self-governance which defines freedom as the rule of law among a community of equals

who are "citizens" of the polis, and who have the right to rule and be ruled' (Benhabib, 2004: 2).

With a slight twist of interpretation, a parallel can be made of the *subsumption pathway*, which is discussed by Latham, in reference to the granting of access to the state to migrants. Accession to the nation state is designated not only if judged as a non-threat to the EU fabric but also with the assuredness towards a kind of 'subsumption pathway' (Latham, 2010: 191). If a play on Latham's words can be made, the poorer nation is to become part of the sea of European unity either anonymously as any other weak nation, or assertively as a cultural entity or perhaps as a welcome but temporary guest. For the individual who is not subsumed then it will be the migrant's children who will be 'subsumed' (Latham, 2010; Brubaker, 2001). In this instance Latham (2010) is implying that eventually integration through assimilation into the lager collective, rather than intercultural sharing, will inevitably occur, but it may not happen for several generations. Likewise, if the nation is not soon to be subsumed then it will be the nation's children collectively who will become assimilated. If such a process could be projected, this would beg the question, where does this leave the liberalist notion of egalitarian based democratic self-governance?

3.6 Governmentality and the colonization of the self

Consequently, in relation to mythological representations of *Irishness* and processes affecting individuals' self-constitution, what can be seen in contemporary Ireland is not only a regression with *jus sanguinis* citizenship being a relic of colonial exclusion, subordination and 'otherness', but what Foucault refers to as a sophisticated system of governance that causes the colonization of the self. According to Nichols (2010: 140) the formation of colonialism and imperialism is not merely seen by Foucault as a physical invasion and territorial occupation, nor as a formal system of governance, but as the colonization of the imagination, of forms of possible knowledge and of the representation of historical events and localities. Through projects of social construction it is a colonization of the privileged self, by the naturalization of mythological notions of identity, ethnicity and race that perpetuate exclusionary practices. Although this is in reference to a wide set of disciplines such as literature,

philosophy, social science and art, it could also be applicable to 'the mechanics of disciplinarization and institutionalization, the constitution, as it were of the colonizer' (Spivak, 1988: 294). Accordingly, Foucault does not tie down the mechanics of the constitution of 'otherness' to any version of imperialism (early or late, pre- or post-). Thus, in the context of Ireland, perhaps what becomes evident is an occupation of the Irish imagination conceived round mythical 'reformulations of Irishness' (Fanning and Mutwarasibo, 2007: 440); notions that have become more institutionally racialized through the passing of the 2004 ICR.

The centrality of the mode of representation of 'otherness' prior to the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum election and post-election is indicative of a form of governmentality that is constituted by knowledge and the exercise of power, which provides the method by which neo-colonialism/neo-imperialism creates exclusion. Foucault (1977) and Said (1978 and 1994), amongst other theorists, would view the colonial discursive field through text and language as being central to the mis/representation of 'otherness' and therefore the method by which exclusions are created. Contrary to this, Ahmad (1992) would argue that actions speak louder than words and that more emphasis is warranted on political coercion, techniques of governance, along with studies of the cultural, which play major constitutive roles in elucidating transhistorical problems of identity or difference and account for dominant formations of knowledge/power (Nichols, 2010: 123*ff.*). The apparatus that substantiates Ahmad's position is well described by Joppke (2003), who argues that citizenship legislation comprises 'legal-technical mechanisms' that are controlled by dominant political forces where 'states modify these rules if they saw a concrete need or interest for it'. It is possible to render both stances applicable when scrutinizing the issues surrounding the 2004 ICR. Thus, the 'process of exclusionary nation building' (Fanning and Mutwarasibo, 2007: 440) is achieved by the inscribing or scripting of subjects together with more formal mechanisms of governmentality.

3.6.1 Autonomous and progressive self-constitution

This thesis would like to posit that if Ireland is to seek progress under liberalist ideals, it is critical that liberalism is also recognised as being a potentially repressive tool of exclusion, which is inherently self-contradictory (Joppke, 2007: 46). What arises with the conflation of tolerant universalist post-nationalism, as discussed earlier, with an intolerant autonomous liberalism/regressive nationalism is a universalist post-nationalism that is simultaneously tolerant and intolerant, or neoliberalism that is repressive and disciplining and as Joppke (2007: 47) states, 'allows illiberals of many stripes…to pursue their altogether different agendas', which often clash with the consensus ideals of liberalism. However, this does not provide an adequate solution to overcoming the paradoxical issues involved in identity formation, liberalism and 'good' governance. The rationale behind the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum based on liberal multiculturalism raises two major issues. The first problematic issue is the 'top-down and managerial' approach, while the latter problem is that the rationale remains based on sediment and concrete relativism, which embeds the defining boundaries of a group such that the differentiation between identities remains fixed and unalterable (Finlay, 2007: 340).

To account for this and to counter the potential of the enlargement of an authoritative trans/national neoliberalism, it would be more fitting to theorize the notion of identity and citizenship within contemporary society in more accessible terms that can constantly be negotiated from a micro level, bottom-up, autonomous perspective. To remove the overbearing aspects of neoliberal governance would require an alternative approach to self-identification or perhaps, as a participant (Daithi) from the initial Preliminary Phase states, a 'spiritual awakening'. The collective imagination of people co-existing on the island of Ireland could potentially desire the construction of a society that is inclusive by its own self-defining conventions. For this, the Irish would need to re-imagine their identity from an experiential perspective that incorporates a more holistic understanding of the self, the society, civic rights and responsibilities. This would entail the recognition of identities as constructed and an acceptance of multiple/hybrid identities that can be moulded into building blocks to complement each other (Grillo, 2003: 161). Thus, a reasonable objective would be the creation of a contemporary sense of belonging and *Irishness* that promoted autonomy within a broader range of defined contributions. Such characteristics of belonging

could stem from the enduring ideals of what most participants referred to as "love" and "pride", or through the re-identification with our humanity, or even new identification with our post-humanity. Thus, the only difficulty, and slight illogicality, would be in making the material immaterial.

Only then is it possible to envisage Ireland consenting to citizenship criteria that are more inclusive, facilitate interculturalism and build on unity of citizenry through tangible aspects of belonging such as rights and responsibilities, symbiotic interrelations and communal solidarities through the recognition of difference grounded in non-essentialist understandings. Perhaps this can only be imagined through the development of a system of governance that seeks to ground solidarities through reciprocal interactions between the individual and public, public and state. Quintessential would be recognition of the justifiable argument that, as described by Thoreau (1849) in the essay Civil Disobedience, the authority of government ought to have the approval and consent of those it governs. Thoreau's (1849) stance is that 'The progress from an absolute to a limited democracy, from a limited monarchy to a democracy, is a progress toward a true respect for the individual.' Thoreau (1849: 39) then implores in his closing, 'Is a democracy, such as we know it, the last improvement possible in government? Is it not possible to take a step further towards recognising and organizing the rights of man?' It may be that human rights have afforded us such advancement. However, the question posed, based on liberal individualism, obliges the individual to be free from, or at least be aware of, the mechanisms of power inherent to Western social organization that can shape and manipulate the individual's perspective. 'There will never be a really free and enlightened State until the State comes to recognize the individual as a higher and independent power, from which all its own power and authority are derived, and treats him accordingly' (Thoreau, 1849: 39), similarly, there will never be a really free and enlightened individual until the individual comes to recognize the mechanisms of governmentality that shape and impinge on the life of individuals.

The elimination of essentialist thinking is not detrimental to perceived self-expression; it is more an opportunity for a greater understanding of the inter-subjectivity of identity. If, as social constructivism suggests, 'people belong to groups because they believe they do so' (White, 2008: 87), the only fixation constraining the Irish from a progressive understanding of the Irish collectivity is allowing for the

broader recognition of what may constitute being Irish. Social constructivism is merely the method by which identification within a culture occurs, such that, according to Charles Taylor, 'one is not born a man, as if humanity were an attribute given at birth: one becomes human through their anchoring in a cultural tradition. In short, particularities make one human' (Benoist, 2004: 14*f.*). As Benoist (2004: 25) states, 'the human condition requires that the individual be always embedded in a value system, in a cultural, socio-historical field, which will allow him to understand himself. Men are *situated* beings.' The methodology and results of the pilot study highlighted the "reflexive conscience" present amongst individuals that permits us to shape our identities and determine the collective identities of the community. It has also drawn attention to a fundamental aspect of identity together with liberal individualism: the recognition of the elemental fact that everyone is different irrespective of the political or existential relevance of cultures and ethnicities. The progression of a socio-democratic society is dependent on solidarities that unite people while mutually recognising these differences and mitigating the potential for conflict.

The fact that essentialist notions attempt to entrap individuals' identity in a sense of fixity and subject formation is taken for granted as being socially determined. Consequently, 'resistance to power requires a subject who is capable of actively and self-consciously fashioning its own identity' (Armstrong, 2008: 22). The imperative from the initial study and driving motivation for the main study is to resist the highly cultural forms of modern power,

> which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognise and which others have to recognise in him. It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects (Foucault, 1982: 212).

That is to say, to increase the ability to practice freedom without discrimination of 'insider' and 'outsider', requires the acknowledgement that,

> Freedom lies in our capacity to discover the historical links between certain modes of self-understanding and modes of domination, and to resist the ways in which we have been classified and identified by the dominant discourses. This means discovering new ways of understanding ourselves and one

> another, refusing to accept the dominant culture's characterization of our practices and desires (Sawicki, 1991: 44).

3.6.2 Seeking knowledge of the discursive practice

The pilot study explored identity theory through the reinforcement of essentialist notions within a postmodernist perspective of social constructivism. As discussed above and in previous chapters, theory makes the supposition that this is achieved by the colonization of the self through mechanisms that influence and shape formations of knowledge/power. Thus, to approach the root cause of knowledge/power formations that influence 'the negotiation between insider and outsider' (Benhabib, 2004: 13) it is deemed fitting to design the Main Phase research to query individuals' perceptions of *Irishness* so as to assess any inconsistencies between individuals' perceived realities and legislation as it definitively exists at present.

Following from Foucault's (1970: xiv) view emphasising greater requirement to seek knowledge of the discursive practice and less of the 'knowing subject', though both are intrinsically interrelated, Hall (1996: 2) states,

> It seems to be in the attempt to rearticulate the relationship between subjects and discourse practices that the question of identity recurs – or rather, if one prefers to stress the process of subjectification to discursive practices, and the politics of exclusion which all such subjectification appears to entail, the question of *identification*.

Accordingly, the core phases of both the Preliminary Phase and Main Phase place the discursive and narrative as paramount in better understanding perceived *Irishness* amongst individuals within contemporary Irish society. Thus, intrinsic to the design of the Preliminary Phase, as well as the thesis overall, is the assumption of the conception of identity from a non-essentialist perspective but as a historically constituted social construct that is processual and infinitely mutable.

Having narrowed the focus of the thesis from both broader theoretical contemplations and specific genuine accounts to arrive at the point of querying subjectification, and the processes of identification, the following chapter progresses by detailing the methodological style employed in this thesis. Moving from the more ontological, albeit perturbed account of identity and *Irishness* as presented up to this point, the subsequent chapter overlaps to present and describe the epistemological way, explicit to this research, in which the empirical information is attained to explore such themes. Following this chapter, the forth chapter presents the innovative methodology, the underpinning methodological theory, design and ethical considerations in the context of the overall aims and objectives of the research.

4 Research Methodology and Design

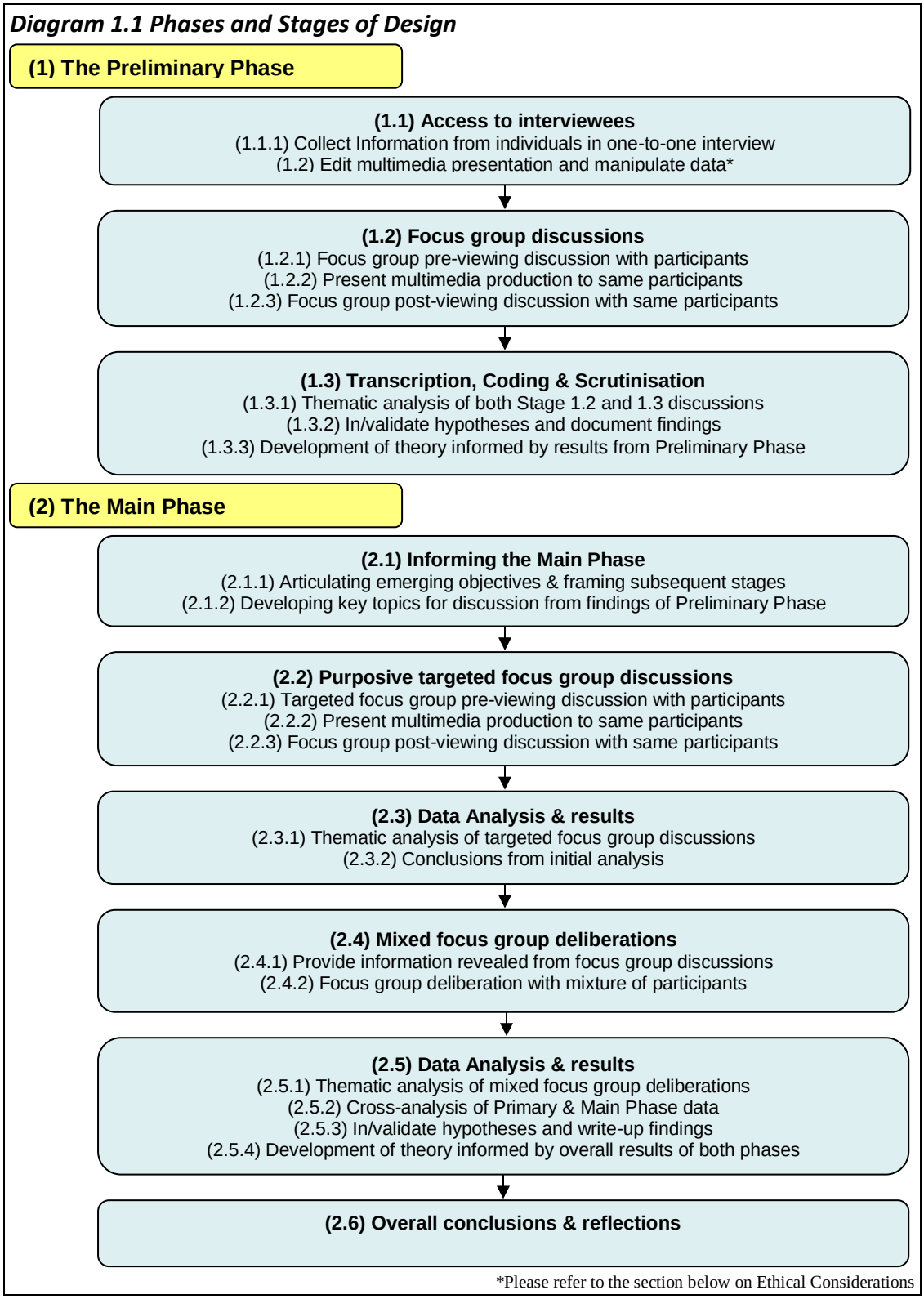
Initially this chapter will discuss the thesis design, highlighting the two interconnected phases involved, as well as the sequential stages within each. The overall design is described as centred on a constructivist Grounded Theoretical framework. Such a methodological approach acknowledges the social construction of meaning achieved through the participant/s and researcher,[43] along with the assumption that processes of identification and their associated characteristics, such as meaning and belonging, are subjective and independent of the particularisms of individuals. From this vantage point the circumspective benefits of such a methodological stance are advanced. In particular, emphasis is placed on reflecting the opinions of the contributors and building reciprocity between the individual and collectivity that, from the normative positioning theorized in the previous chapters, would stress social amelioration.

The overall design is illustrated graphically showing the two phases, The Preliminary Phase and The Main Phase and the respective stages within each (please refer to Diagram 1.1, page 94). [44] The initial Preliminary Phase incorporates within the research a creative element of social experiment, which is recollected in the subsequent section. It recalls the methodology in relation to the initial research objective; to explore the superficiality of perceived *Irishness*. Within the section describing the overall design, an account of the Main Phase provides explanation of the novel design features and includes an account of the rationale for expansion through the incorporation of additional components. Subsequent to description of the overall design, details on ethical considerations and limitations are provided.

[43] Henceforth, the researcher is referred to interchangeably as the researcher, facilitator or author.

[44] The research herein, or Main Phase research, proceeds from a Preliminary Phase study entitled 'Perceived *Irishness*: An exploration of the superficiality of identity using a reflexive social experimental approach'. The Preliminary Phase / pilot study was completed in 2011 and the dissertation was submitted in partial fulfilment for a Masters of Philosophy in Race, Ethnicity and Conflict at Trinity College Dublin.

Diagram 1.1: The design of the Preliminary Phase and Main Phase



What is intrinsically incorporated into this research methodology is a multistage approach at both phases. In the Preliminary Phase this multistage methodological design comprises of both one-to-one interviews and focus group discussions which aims to analyse the performative constitution of identity (Butler, 1988). This is analogous to what Butler (1990: 139*ff.*; 1993: 95*ff.*) refers to as 'performativity', whereby power asserting itself in identity formation can be observed in participants through societal regulation of moral judgement, values and beliefs which is constructed, continued or contrarily destabilized through performance. Additionally, the methodology for the Preliminary Phase is centred on a reflexive experimental design that seeks to evoke a specific response from participants. Incorporation of a reflexive element throughout its approach means that the process by which the data is collected will consistently be questioned and justified (McRobbie, 1977: 46). Reflexivity also seeks substantiation and confirming refutation of theory in a more iterative, but holistic manner. To a extent, such an approach addresses aspects relating to the knowledge / power paradigm theorized by Foucault (1977) and the questions posed by Gunaratnam (2003: 3), explicitly '…how we produce knowledge about difference, and how what we know (or what we claim to know) is caught up with specific histories and relations of power.' The reflexive approach taken in this study is seen as integral to the overall project design and essential to the fulfilment of several key objectives of the thesis, as discussed in the previous chapters, particularly in relation to knowledge production and mythological notions of *Irishness*.

The focus of the study is on a qualitative participatory, reflexive and grass-root phase using current technological means of communication. This thesis, comprising primarily of the Main Phase, expands and delves deeper into the scrutiny of perceptions of 'Irish' identity through a broadly similar vein but is extended to a larger number of individuals across more diverse settings. Similar to the aspirations and outcomes of work by Byrne and O'Mahony's (2012: 72),[45] the research demonstrates through collaborative interaction how researchers and members of society can produce meaningful social interventions that may be somewhat

[45] Byrne and O'Mahony (2012) researched 'Family and Community: (Re)Telling Our Own Story'. In it Byrne and O'Mahony (2012: 72) describe, 'The collaborative interaction and the transdisciplinary meeting of the three knowledges of sociologist, artist, and the local combined to collectively tell a narrative of a people and place, rooted in history but connected to contemporary familial and community relationships. Recognizing that local knowledge of place, kinship, and custom could be framed and presented from the perspective of local knowers and made visible within an academic and cultural context has been both emancipatory and transformatory for those involved.'

emancipatory and transformative for both people individually and also the wider community or society at large.

Both the initial methodology and the subsequent practices facilitate discussions are examined through the process of discourse analysis, deriving from Derrida's notion of deconstructing discourse as documented in, *Of Grammatology*.[46] Similar to the consideration that '…the "subject" of knowledge then becomes the text' (Spivak, 1997: 320), this thesis is based on a multistage analysis of participant's opinions prior to and responses after viewing a multimedia presentation through thematic discourse analysis. This is applied so as to deconstruct not only the "subject's" understanding but also negotiation of identity and to document its formation within interactive conversation. In addition, focusing on conversation discourse means that important characteristics of 'the *linguistic production relations* within which it is produced' (Bourdieu, 1977: 647) allow for the recognition of language as a symbolic power relation. This takes into account the authoritative use of language, of which Bourdieu (1977: 648) writes,

> Language is not only an instrument of communication or even of knowledge, but also an instrument of power. A person speaks not only to be understood but also to be believed, obeyed, respected, distinguished. Hence the full definition of competence as the right to speech, *i.e.* to the legitimate language, the authorized language which is also the language of authority. Competence implies the power to impose reception.

As the aim in creating such an experimental model is to focus on thematic discourse and discussion analysis, the study relies on several main methods of sampling that in turn depend heavily on access and recruitment in their own specific ways. Similar to Willis's (1977: 3) view such a focused interest on 'the cultural' dictates the qualitative methods and the approach employed in the research, as well as the reflexive format of the presentation.

In acknowledging that *a priori* assumptions are made when considering the subjectivity of identity formations, it is a '…necessity to identify life experience as partial within which contradictions are to be expected' (Gunaratnam, 2003: 6). This substantiates that it is appropriate to take into account ethical considerations and

[46] Written by Jaques Derrida in 1967 and translated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in 1997.

corollaries when conducting such research on perceived identities with a variety of subjects. Thus, as far as is possible ethical issues will be dealt with thoroughly and effectively to fully comprise aspects, such as, insuring all participants at the various stages are properly informed, have given consensual agreement to take part and for the usage and storage of data in its different forms. Also assuring all participants are provided the possibility to opt out at any stage of their participation. Finally, outcomes and limitations of the design are addressed at the end of this chapter.

4.1 An iterative approach to constructivist Grounded Theory

Methodological theory primarily takes into consideration the usefulness and benefit of the conjectural perspective in meeting the objectives of the research, in addition to its complementarity to the overall reflexive design of the study. Therefore, it adopts a 'neopragmatic perspective' (Hansen, 2006: 294). Rather than defining 'truth' as objective, transcendent and based on indisputable realities, it redefines 'truth' in a pragmatic way, as local and utilitarian (Hansen, 2006: 294). As such, it negates from being over saturated by the array of theoretical propositions postmodernist relativism entails and instead opens space for the synthesis of novel observational accounts and theoretical propositions. By implementing a pragmatic utilitarian approach to the selection of methodology, it was decided that a Grounded Theoretical approach be advocated throughout this thesis, in conjunction with the foundational notion of identities being primarily socially constructed. This is because central to this thesis is the objective to provide an intercultural and multi-individual process in which the voices, perspectives and opinions of the participants are given greatest priority while acknowledging 'the importance of a multiplicity of perspectives and "truths"' (Strauss, 1987; Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 1994, 1998; Mills *et al.*, 2006).

Furthermore, is the acknowledgement that this study relies on interpretive work and coding. Thus as Strauss and Corbin (1994: 274) stipulate, '…interpretations must include the perspectives and voice of the people who we study.' A similar justification for such a theoretical approach is that, as Thomas and James (2006) suggest, it is impossible to detach oneself from one's own preconceptions in the collection and analysis of particular data.

However, instead of taking a more purist Grounded Theoretical approach that begins with inductive logic, uses emergent strategies, relies on comparative inquiry and is explicitly analytic, the constructivist Grounded Theory approach,

> …assumes that people construct both the studied phenomenon and the research process through their actions. This approach recognizes the constraints that historical, social, and situational conditions exert on these actions and acknowledges the researcher's active role in shaping the data and analysis (Charmaz, 2011: 359*f*.).

Adopting such a methodological approach is appropriate when taking the stance in arguing for the subjective nature of the attainment of knowledge and endorsing postmodernist thought which is seen as anti-essentialist. It is complementary to the research framework and the fundamental underpinning theory relating to the ethical imperative of knowledge acquisition (as discussed in the initial chapters). Correspondingly, the ethical imperative of knowledge acquisition is reflected in the research paradigm chosen, which emphasizes the "constructedness" of reality and the denial of the existence of any objective truth (Mills *et al.*, 2006: 26). The constructivist approach takes a relativist ontological position which is considered as 'asserting instead that realities are social constructions of the mind, and that there exist as many such constructions as there are individuals (although clearly many constructions will be shared)' (Guba and Lincoln, 1989: 43). Additionally, the constructivist approach allows for the recognition of the co-construction of meaning through an interrelationship between the researcher and participants which provides a more postmodernist epistemological justification for adopting such an approach (Mills *et al.*, 2006; Hayes and Oppenheim, 1997; Pidgeon and Henwood, 1997).

It would seem an impossibility to approach this research void of preconceived ideas that would require corroboration or falsification. Nonetheless, formulated through an iterative analytic process there are a set of common characteristics that resemble Grounded Theory but have also evolved into what is termed Constructivist Grounded Theory. The methodological approach implements sensitivity towards a variety of theories, literature review, comparative analysis of gleaned data, verification of meanings, identification of key categories, translation of interpretations into coding,

the drafting of diagrams and memos, along with examination through testing (Mills *et al.*, 2006; McCann and Clark, 2003).

4.2 Methodological justification: focusing on the dominant group

The subject of this research is, but not limited to, the dominant national group. It is a combination of both theoretical and empirical investigations exploring identity and belonging in everyday speech related to daily experience. Similar to Skey's (2011) work entitled, *National Belonging & Everyday Life: The Significance of Nationhood in an Uncertain World*, the methodological approach places at the centre of attention what is considered a rather underexplored area or lacuna in academic research (Skey, 2011: 28). Specifically, it studies the role played by ordinary people in processes of identification and practices of belonging. To an extent it is alternative as the methodology does not confine itself to a qualitative study of viewpoints from a supposed ethnic majority; it remains open and actively encourages contribution from individuals beyond the mythological boundaries constructed within the imaginary homogenous nation. By focusing on the micro-sociological and scrutinizing even the notion of dominant ethnicity, while mitigating reification of essentialist notions, this methodological approach does not trap itself in its own bind of contradictions in relation to the overall framework of the thesis.

The research focuses on perceptions of *Irishness* through discourse analysis. It analyses discourse primarily from individuals who may, or may not, ordinarily associate themselves within the dominant group of Irish society. The justification for such a discursive analytical approach relies on the desire to conduct empirical research that focuses on what Widdicome and Wooffit (1994: 4) describe as '…discourses – systems of meanings and concepts which provide a coherent way of representing the world – through which persons are ascribed identities.' Discourse analysis shifts the focus of analysis towards language, interaction through dialogue and the ways in which identities are narrated through language. Furthermore, when taking into account the issues and complexities of dominant and minority group dynamics it can be related to Gramsci's writings which, according to Lears (1985: 589) 'stressed the centrality of language in cementing a given group's prestige and cultural leadership.' Not only is language central to the process of identity formation,

language usage is a component in shaping society. This is because Gramsci views society as a labile system where ruling-class domination may persist or it may shift through changing discourses. As purported by Lears (1985), this Gramscian view means that society is in a constant process where counter-hegemonies operate. As Lears (1985: 571) summarizes, 'Gramsci's vision of society involves not a mechanical model of base and superstructure but a complex interaction of relatively autonomous spheres (public and private; political, cultural, and economic) within a totality of attitudes and practices.' Taking this on-board means that by focusing on discourse it allows the researcher to consider language expressions as indicative of various processes of acculturation. As such, it assists in transcending an understanding of subjects' viewpoints that might otherwise be seen as trapped within the duality of compliance and resistance. Likewise, using conversation analysis recognises that

> Language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker's intentions; it is populated – overpopulated – with the intentions of others… The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes one's "own" only when the speaker populates it with his own intentions, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language…but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intention; it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one's own (Bakhtim, 1992: 294).

Widdicome and Wooffit (1994: 4) make the claim that discourse analysis may not adequately challenge traditional social psychological assumptions, nor might it do enough to address aspects relating to power, gender, class and racism. Widdicome and Wooffit (1994: 4) however suggest, it can mitigate such shortcomings by incorporating work by social philosophers such as Foucault, Derrida and Lacan. In order to account for this, the analytical approach to researching discourse in this thesis is consistently scrutinized within a constructivist Grounded Theoretical framework that iteratively draws from social philosophical theory. Furthermore, an approach that validates the use of focus group discussions rather than one-to-one interviews becomes justifiable because respondents' identities are seen as an interactional

resource in the production of discursive action (Widdicome and Wooffit, 1994: 5). Discourse analysis places emphasis upon three interrelated key points of interest. It allows the researcher gain an understanding of, first, the constructive properties of language use, secondly, the ways individuals constitute society through their membership or lack of, and thirdly, it underscores the link between individuals and society by analysing social identity as a derivation of group membership or social category ascription, thus group affiliation (Widdicome and Wooffit, 1994: 5).

4.3 Building reciprocity between the individual and the collective

This thesis addresses not merely challenges in relation to identity but brings to the fore the interconnected challenges related to sovereignty, state or collectivity. With globalization and trans-Europeanization and the consequences of such affecting the saliency of belonging, a feature that requires consideration is the reciprocity between the individual and state/collectivity with regard to individuals' rights and responsibilities respectively. An additional consideration is the depreciating power of the nation state in managing its affairs, particularly its diminishing authority over the national economy because of its bind to neo-liberal free market ideologies and current trajectories in globalization.[47]

From understanding transformations at both a spatial and temporal level, this research, in an innovative manner, conceptualizes alternatives to counter the negative effects of mis/conceptions propagated within society through its reliance on both synthesis (bottom-up) and decomposition (top-down) systems of knowledge ordering. Inherent to the experimental design a space is created that allows for the re-evaluation of *Irishness* by participants, evoked at a personal level, as well as the production of information that can add to the body of knowledge relating to socio-political and socio-psychological theory.

Some of the main benefits of this research design are that it reflects the opinions of the contributors and participants at any given time; it is replicable and easily

[47] In *Regulating Immigration in a Global Age: A New Policy Landscape*, Sassen (2005: 38) discusses how the state's regulatory role and autonomy have been affected by internationalization and the proliferation of bi- and multilateral agreements. Rosenau (1992: 256) describes how, 'governments have undergone a narrowing of the range in which their authority and legitimacy are operative' which is substantiated by Hardt and Negri (2000: xi) who claim, 'in step with the processes of globalisation, the sovereignty of nation-states, while still effective, has progressively declined.'

reproduced with further potential for its expansion and practical value. Another fundamental benefit of this research, although having a component that is centred on an experimental design, is that it is not simply empirical sociological research nor is it social technology (sociological theory applied to social practice). This research consciously carves out a third space by attempting to advance socio-psychological knowledge while being an agent of social amelioration, through reflection on self-identification and self-differentiation. Thus, an important benefit of such a study is that its success, as a piece of research, not only rests in the possibility of contributing to knowledge theory but also to advocating change in social reality (Agassi, 1990: 2). It allows for an evaluation, albeit minor, and potential formulation of theory and raises awareness of concealed mechanisms that influence individuals' perceptions of identity and reality. What is advantageous in the overall design is that it does not purport to challenge the philosophical objection that 'rests on the claim that truth is inaccessible, so that there is no possibility of objectivity in the social sciences, so that there is no need to try to be objective' (Agassi, 1990: 3). It not only recognises the subjectivity of participants' realities, which is appropriate for the social sciences, it also attempts to develop self-constitutionality at the individual level interwoven with empowerment at the level of the collective.

Added to this, theory such as *cultural hegemony* implies that capitalists and institutions defend the status quo so as to maintain and legitimize hegemonic power. Gramsci (1971: 12) provides a loose definition of hegemony of culture somewhat ambiguously as,

> the 'spontaneous' consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group: this consent is 'historically' caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production.

Such maintenance cannot be seen as absent from within the field of social science as though the social sciences have somehow remained unadulterated from the long extending reach of capitalism. In particular, preservation of the hierarchal order occurs when institutions are encouraged to support specifically chosen empirical sociological research and as such this can be understood as inherently subjective,

serving the general interests of both the sociologist and the benefactor, as it were. As mentioned, contrary to this argument is acknowledgement of the subjective nature of the study and the circumstance that it cannot expect to be interpreted as an extensively representative empirical study.

With such an approach that relies on the inherent subjectivity of its processes, the participants and the researcher relate to each other in a participatory fashion and the researcher can consider aspects of attitudes and behaviour relative to the thematic discourse and discussion analysis. The participatory process during discussions allows for improvisation by the researcher, along with self-representation by the participants and reflection, so that amendments or adjustments can be made to their own self-portrayal and understanding.

As the researcher is working within the constraints of an independent power-base, that being the Department of Sociology at Trinity College Dublin, it also provides a benefit because it legitimates the project by requiring standards of ethics, methodological approach and production. It also allows the project freedom to be conducted without necessarily being exposed to other external influences, thus, with a degree of impartiality, which can be conveyed to the participants.

4.4 Design innovation

The design can be seen as split into two main phases (as illustrated in Diagram 1.1). The initial pilot study is seen as the catalyst for the construction of interrogations that would allow unravelling of core issues relating to perceptions of *Irishness*. It also tested the validity of the incorporated experimental stage. In exploring perceived *Irishness*, within contemporary Irish society, and its formation through social construction as a means of reinforcing belonging, the Preliminary Phase assessed the means of subordinating self-identification under the nation/Irish antonym. It sought to examine perceptions of *Irishness* within members of the collective and to illuminate the superficiality of such perceptions. Thus, the initial investigation focused on questioning perceptions of *Irishness*. It also attempted to test if 'Irish' identity could be manipulated through a reflexive social experimental approach. In doing so, the research aimed to observe perceptions conceived from essentialist notions of 'the other' and illusions of difference. The Preliminary Phase is seen as informing the

Main Phase of the research which emphasizes the necessity to re-evaluate perceptions of *Irishness* that are more inclusive of 'the other'.

The difference is that the Preliminary Phase primarily focused on the manipulation of subjects' perceived notions of *Irishness,* whereas the Main Phase of the thesis expands on the decentred aspect of identity formation and attempts to create space for discussion on governance and the proactive re-conceptualization of alternative identities, through deliberation and self-reflection on processes of identification. Conducting focus group discussions with members of the public in Irish society connects with academic arguments on identity and nationalist ideology which are related to the perceived positioning of the self and assumed practicalities of the lived experience of ordinary individuals' (Tovey *et al.*, 1989: 25*f.*). It also takes into account the conceivably racial state (Goldberg, 2002; Lentin and McVeigh, 2006; Lentin, 2007) and how, as Tovey *et al.* (1989: 26) further expound, individuals might perceive themselves as

> subjects of this, and not some other, state (the subjects of this state's laws, the audience for this state's public service broadcasting, the participants in this state's education or welfare institutions and so on). It can be argued that such experiences are what, in the contemporary world, define and create the 'people' which the state claims to represent.

Or, as De Paor (1979: 25) advised several decades ago, 'romantic nationalism and impatient anti-nationalism, in their various forms, have made it difficult for us to see Ireland as a whole, and we need to get down more and more to local detail in order to understand the present direction of our society.'

By adopting a design that centres on focus group discussions and questionnaires this thesis advocates a bottom-up approach and engenders thought on the process of identification with members of the public realm who are the fabric of a given society. Conducting such work aids in the provision of more precise understandings of identity, in particular identity formations in the Irish context, and how identity functions both through its formation as an individual project and its role of interacting in social and cultural contexts (Schwartz, 2001: 9).

Both phases of the research rely on visual and auditory stimuli in the form of narration within a multimedia presentation produced specifically for the study. The

method that is used for the creation of a multimedia presentation is dependent on one-to-one semi-structured interviews (please refer to Table 1.1). Following this, focus group discussions are conducted, which provide a body of transcribed raw information that is then analysed as the focal point for the development of the thesis (please refer to Table 1.2). Data analysis techniques involve a thematic approach to group discussions, pre- and post- viewing, which is then analysed and compared through coding. From this coded information, not only does the informative data reveal key themes, it informs the directionality of the main thesis both theoretically and methodologically. As such, it is in keeping with theoretical aspects of participatory research by maintaining an inductive approach.

The overall design is in contestation with the assumptions made by those advocating the achievements of liberal democracy specifically in relation to the public sphere whereby it is recognised as open to all equally (Coates, 1997: 89). Instead it is purposely designed to recognise and mitigate what Fraser (1990: 65*f.*) describes: 'where societal inequality persists, deliberative processes in public spheres will tend to operate to the advantage of dominant groups and to the disadvantage of subordinates'. By disregarding such social structuring, the methodology allows for 'parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses, so as to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs' (Fraser, 1990: 67). In this way, the methodological approach could be viewed as having a participatory democratic form that promotes deliberation between the public sphere within Irish society and the *subaltern counterpublic* that is present and deserves acknowledgement and repositioning. The aim of the design is not to focus on conflict or hierarchical positions, but rather to be both affective and effective through engagement and reflection on processes of re-identification and perhaps resolve certain challenges in relation to 'Irish' identity and its socially constructed formation.

4.4.1 From the Preliminary Phase to the Main Phase

As aspects of the Preliminary Phase are utilized in this thesis, an overview of the pilot study design is provided below, along with a description of its incorporation into this thesis or Main Phase. A notable aspect is the adoption of the multi-media production

which was also utilized in the same fashion during the focus group discussion in the Main Phase of this research, as further elaborated below.

The Preliminary Phase provides the foundation for the Main Phase by enabling:

1/ contribution towards the development of a multimedia presentation,

2/ an assessment of the reflexive social experimental approach undertaken, and,

3/ the testing of an approach for focus group discussions and discourse analysis that could be replicable not only in the main study of this thesis but could be replicated in further such studies.

The Preliminary Phase is seen as split into three discrete stages that operate sequentially (as shown above in Diagram 1.1). The first stage of the Preliminary Phase involves the production of a multimedia presentation. The multimedia presentation is created from information gathered from one-to-one semi-structured interviews with four individual contributors. These individual contributors are selected on the basis of their status relative to the conditionality of *jus sanguinis* and *jus soli* Irish citizenship and nationality. As detailed in the third chapter, the Irish constitutional referendum on citizenship in 2004 removed emphasis from *jus soli* nationality (nationality right based on territorial place of birth), and placed greater emphasis on *jus sanguinis* rationale (nationality right based on bloodline descend). The primary reason for selecting such participants is to assess if current citizenship legislation fails to account for the heterogeneous make up of Irish society. In becoming a less inclusive mode of governance, it may be incongruent with contemporary societal perceptions of *Irishness*. If this were plausible, the criteria for membership of the Irish collective as defined by law may be misrepresentative, and require re-evaluation.

The only requirement for the first stage is that the contributors are physically present and conform to the ethical requirements, such as, consensually agree to contribute. The individual interviewees were selected by purposive sampling, which requires utilizing gatekeepers within organizations and beyond.

The data for the first stage is collected through a one-to-one interview process, and discussion involving the utilization of audio and visual equipment. Notes are also taken during the course of the conversations. Thus, the multimedia presentation is

created using excerpts of audio recordings from the interviews, incorporated with visual material from the interviewees. Individuals' portraits are documented through the medium of photography and interlaced with still images of other visual material, such as, objects of personal value, personal lifestyle, old photographs, memorabilia, etc. These are requested to be brought prior to the interview and the interviewees were given as much freedom as possible to bring objects that were personally felt to be relevant to each of them. To create a good rapport with the contributors the researcher takes a reflexive approach and is as open as possible about the research and the researcher's personal position. This is done within an environment that is congenial to the contributors; where they can be most comfortable and relaxed.

As detailed above, individual interviewees are selected according to their appropriateness for the study. This prejudice is not seen to be excessively problematic within the remit of the overall investigation, as the criteria and categorizations are already normative and legally bound within Irish society. One concern is that relying on such categorizations may be seen to reinforce stereotypical notions that then become integrated into the research itself. However, this is mitigated for by virtue of the open and inclusive selection process conducted for the focus group discussions, which is at liberty from the current legal criteria that define entitlement to being/becoming an Irish citizen. The interviewees had minimal direct connection to the researcher, personal or otherwise.

4.4.2 Findings from the Preliminary Phase

The focus of the pilot study aimed to explore the superficiality of perceived 'Irish' identity, as well as the misperception of the so-called 'other' amongst a random group of people, most of whom ostensibly self-recognise as Irish, in addition to being officially recognised by the state and internationally as Irish. Ergo, the Preliminary Phase did not necessarily aim to be representative of the population as a whole. The participants may be considered exceptions to the collective, or they may be representative. However, from the outset the presumption rested on contemporary sociological theory; that peoples' perceptions as individuals are socially constructed to varying degrees and depend on a wide variety of factors that ascribe different modes of consciousness. Thus, the experiment can be seen as closed. By attempting to

measure changes of perceived *Irishness* amongst participants within the manipulative social experiment,[48] it was attempting to discover if perceptions of *Irishness* can be altered after simply being exposed to stimuli that evokes questioning amongst the individuals concerning 'Irish' identity. The major advantage envisaged was that if changes were to have occurred, it may have validated the suggestion that 'Irish' identity can be perceived superficially by individuals and moreover, manipulated by a relatively brief exposure to visual and audio stimuli. Such verification may be inferred as corroborating the proposal that the control of knowledge/power can shape and create representations of both the stereotypical and the Irish antonym and affect at least some individuals' perceived opinions of 'Irish' identity.

Furthermore, the aim of the Preliminary Phase was to design an experiment that perturbs a specific system with the expectation of a specific response. The main purpose of the Preliminary Phase was to apply sociological theory to manipulative social experimental design in a project that attempts to explore aspects of perceived identity, in this case, *Irishness*. Thus, the experimental design strategy with qualitative methods being employed incorporating reflexivity, took into account the spatial-temporal aspects of sociological research. It allowed for the analysis of societal phenomena within its contemporary condition and for the examination of the connections between what is grounded in 'reality', albeit perceived, and what is socio-theoretical. This allowed both to be compared within a relatively narrow timeframe thus depicting systems and effects more accurately, in an ever evolving and society in flux.

The limitations of the results were always thus, that it could not be presumed to be representative of a larger population. Conversely, it was seen that if amongst the participants of the reflexive experiment there was no specific response, it would have either indicated that individual identification was strong amongst those individuals, thus not easily manipulated by external stimuli or that the experimental design did not compensate for other influencing factors that may be responsible in affecting the participants' perception of *Irishness*. The former would provide support that of those individuals who participated, 'Irish' identity is not labile, but is more a fixed aspect of social psychological attitudes and behaviour.

[48] The original idea for carrying out such an experiment stems from Jane Elliot's, "blue-eyed/brown-eyed" social exercise.

One of the primary objectives of the Preliminary Phase was to instil a sense of reflexive cognisance amongst participants and to observe this within changes in discourse pre- and post- viewing the multimedia presentation. To this end it was important to highlight that subtle noticeable change in viewpoint did occur amongst participants, however, this was not as significant as expected. Indeed, subtleties in change of outlook did occur as the dialogues proceeded in each discussion. What was revealing was that these subtle alterations were further substantiated by noticeable inconsistencies made by participants within each focus group discussions, even though there were more general consistencies amongst each discussion. These discrepancies provide vital knowledge for the development and construction of the successive Main Phase of the research.

There were several reasons as to why only subtle changes might have occurred. What was considered the most obvious reason was that most of the participants, who attended, showed from the onset a particular interest and knowledge on the broader issues relating to identity, immigration and *Irishness*. To add to this, in general most seemed to have a relatively positive and progressive outlook on issues relating to identity and immigration, which was why they actively decided to participate in the research project. Although the Irish Citizenship Referendum was held in 2004, it was still expected that of the vast majority that voted in favour of a more restrictive policy to citizenship, at least some of the participants who volunteered would be of a similar persuasion. More specifically, because none of the participants held strongly opinionated views on the issues, as indicated through their openness to participate in the first place, any major change in perspective pre- and post- viewing became less pronounced. Those who did participate may not have been representative of the opinions of the majority who voted in the 2004 Referendum. It is, however, noteworthy that during canvassing, remarks and opinions made by those vocal enough to express their stance corresponded more with the outcomes of the 2004 ICR. Nevertheless, none of these individuals made the effort to attend. This in itself may be quite telling both from the perspective of a lack of desire to actively participate, or from a sense of disillusionment or resignation, in part attributed to the economic and social predicaments facing Ireland.

In understanding the perceptions of ‘Irish’ identity, as portrayed by participants of the Preliminary Phase, as well as acknowledging limitations of the manipulative social

experimental design, the design of the subsequent Main Phase was then adjusted and appropriately modified so as to provide more revealing outcomes. From the outcomes and reflections, it was determined that the manipulative aspect of the design was not a requirement to elicit specific responses that were informative and revealing. From this it was deemed to be of lesser concern for the succeeding Main Phase design. However, to maintain the integrity of the design, the same manipulated multimedia presentation was utilized in a similar fashion as described heretofore, within the Main Phase of the project. The crucial information for analysis was obtained during both phases, whereby pre- and post-viewing data was acquired through the discrete recording and note taking of focus group discussions.

The results from the Preliminary Phase of the thesis not only added benefit by taking into account spatial and temporal elements, the findings and conclusions provide invaluable data that informs the construction of the qualitative thematic discussions and additional questions (please refer to Appendix 1.5) that are adopted in the Main Phase of the design. The construction of the qualitative thematic discussions was then fine-tuned as a data collection instrument so as to focus on key issues discussed during the Preliminary Phase focus group discussions and questions deemed pertinent to the aim of investigating processes and forms of (re)identification could then be more accurately disclosed.

4.4.3 The Main Phase design

The Main Phase expands on an exploration of participants' perceived views of *Irishness* and makes comparisons with the state's role in constructing national identity. The rationale of identification is related to justify/falsify the legislative boundaries that are drawn to fashion difference between the "them" and "us" of contemporary Irish society. As discussed in the previous section, the Main Phase is constructed with the explicit intension of creating the foundations to support deliberation on Irish identification and potentially alternate conceptualizations of "what it means to be Irish". It builds on findings from the Preliminary Phase, which focused on the manipulative aspect of experimental design and relied primarily on

opinions from participants from both rural and semi-urban backgrounds.[49] The Main Phase shifts attention towards the more urban and suburban setting of Dublin, the capital city of Ireland and extends to other localities in the country and beyond. It supplements at a spatial level, opinions obtained through multiple focus group discussions within Dublin city, suburban and commuter environments, other more rural towns and villages, as well as an extrajudicial extension to incorporate opinions from Belfast, Northern Ireland. The locations of the eight Main Phase focus group discussions are: Belfast, Limerick, Drumondra, Naas, Leixlip, Clondalkin Drogheda and Coolock. Although this is by no means seen to represent and cover the geographical expanse of Ireland at a shallow level, instead such a sampling approach provides rich and deep data looking more at socio-psychological determinants that may play a role in influencing individuals' perceptions of, and sensitivities to, their own realities. As Inglis and Donnelly (2011: 136) suggest 'one of the advantages of an open-ended, qualitative approach to social research is that it can bring to the surface issues and processes that were not identified at the outset as being significant.' It must be noted that although initially this is conducted in a relatively targeted manner, which aims at revealing information from specific cohorts, participants may or may not have strong associations with the specific geographic localities where the discussions were held. It is assumed however that focus group discussions do include city urban, suburban, town lands and rural residents, as well as individuals who are students, unemployed or working professionals in age ranges between young teenagers up to retirees (please refer to Table 1.3).

The design of the Main Phase allows for both an iterative process of cross-examination and a Grounded Theoretical approach. It also incorporates reflexivity through a level of participatory involvement in the shaping of discussions. The analysis of data, provides substantial in-depth information and results that can be related to theory and philosophical considerations so as to construct conclusions that are significant and beneficial towards informing policy and, from a normative perspective, may be beneficial towards the progression of an egalitarian, socio-

[49] With regard to the recruitment of participants for the Preliminary Phase focus group discussions, two separate locations were canvassed comprehensively that could be considered as ideal for the purpose of this study due to their location specificity and demographic distribution. Both towns are recognised as commuter towns from Dublin yet would be in the hinterland of Irish rural life. In addition to this, the towns have witnessed fluxes in both internal migrations from other Irish urban areas, specifically Dublin, along with considerable international migration.

democratic society. Furthermore, the innovative design framework produced may serve as a model for inclusive, participatory democracy and 'good' governance in future.[50]

In adopting a multiphase approach that is methodologically iterative and reflexive, the findings, results and conclusions are to some extent interrelated to allow for reflexive re-theorization.[51] Through a process of theory and methodology synthesis that has an element of reflexivity, modifications and adaptations enhance both the subsequent Main Phase process and the overall findings of the thesis. Referring to theory of the nation state and identity formation, it is not expected that criteria, other than association with Irish nationality or exposure to Irish society, has any major influencing effect on the outcomes of the research. The reason for this is that association with Irish nationality and exposure to Irish society are the two major factors believed to influence perceived *Irishness* in individuals. Thus the study, using an exploratory approach to identity, primarily focused on these criteria.

The second and third stages of the Preliminary Phase are replicated in the Main Phase (as graphically illustrated in Diagram 1.1 above). The main focus of the research involves thematic focus group discussions, and requires completely independent groups of participants. Focus group discussions are recruited via canvassing networks, associations, institutions, youth and community groups, educational organizations, etc. primarily through online emailing, follow-up calls and communications. A letter for further circulation outlining the request for participation, is also attached to each email sent to potential correspondent gatekeepers/participants (please refer to Appendix 1.1).[52]

The participants of each focus group are assembled to take part in a discussion whose thematic focal point is primarily on 'Irish' identity and included questions on themes relating to ethnicity and citizenship. Within each thematic focus group discussion the

[50] For an overview of an historical account of more in situ methodological approaches and development within the Chicago School and the Birmingham School please refer to Colosi's (2010) work.

[51] This more constructivist approach to Grounded Theory is quite similar to Thornberg's (2012) proposal of an informed Grounded Theoretical approach. Both compensate for the impossible position of pure induction. As Thornberg (2012: 255) claims, in an informed Grounded Theory approach, 'the researcher takes the advantage of pre-existing theories and research findings in the substantive field in a sensitive, creative, and flexible way.'

[52] Alternatively, for the recruitment of Preliminary Phase canvassing for participants was conducted on the street at central locations of two commuter towns, Kells and Navan, North-West of the city of Dublin. Both locations provide centres of commerce for people from the surrounding rural area, the indigenous urban population, recent inhabitants originally from Dublin, migrants and tourists.

participants initially have a pre-viewing conversation on issues pertaining to identity, ethnicity and citizenship, then view the multimedia presentation prepared (lasting 20 minutes) and this is followed up with the same participants taking part in a focused group discussion post-viewing.[53]

The data collection tools that are used in the second stage of both the Preliminary Phase and Main Phase are pre- & post- group discussions with observation referring to open ended interrogations for qualitative analysis and the completion of a factsheet to record contributors' information such as age bracket, profession, gender, etc. (please refer to Appendix 1.3). Adhering to conventions of researching both focus group discussions and interviews, the questions are asked sequentially in a standardized format. Identical pre- and post-viewing questions are asked both for the Preliminary Phase and Main Phase (please refer to Appendix 1.4). This is conducted in order to maintain consistency and the potential for accurate cross-comparative analysis. Lacking congruity would otherwise make any comparison unreliable. However, time permitting and where possible, supplementary questions (AQ) were asked at the latter stages of each Main Phase focus group discussion (please refer to Appendix 1.5).

As described above, data is collected from the participants before viewing the manipulated multimedia information through a focus group discussion. An interactive-reactive approach is taken, by providing questions to prompt the group discussions. Also a participatory approach is taken so as to give the participants the opportunity to lead the discussion. To the best of the facilitator's ability, fluid communication and equal participation are facilitated within the group. During the discussions, an audio recorder is used discreetly. The advantage of this is that an exact documentation of the conversation during the discussion is recorded. Data is also collected from recording the participants' discussion after viewing the presentation.

[53] The methodological approach is quite similar to O'Connor's (1997) work on audience studies, however, the object of the analysis in this case is to investigate both the extent and ways in which representations of *Irishness* are perceived and discussed amongst groups of individuals both prior to and after viewing a multimedia production created by the researcher. Additionally, the participants own representations of 'Irish' identity are simultaneously incorporated into the study, rather than separated.

For the Main Phase additional questions were also deliberated towards the latter part of the discussions.[54]

A thematic approach to data analysis of the group discussions is conducted. The transcribed information contained in both the one-to-one interviews and focus group discussions (pre/post-viewing) are compared, using an interpretive technique of coding. Segments are labelled with a 'code' so as to associate data segments together and inform the research objectives. The coded themes are drawn up in a table, their associations are cross-referenced and their interconnected relationships are graphically illustrated. From the coded information, the occurrence of significant changes in opinions, variations in phraseology and alterations in terminology by participants is examined. Such scrutiny looks at both individual and collective contributions in a comparative manner that focuses on similarities and differences, and through cross-referencing, also examines different individual and collective contributions over the different stages.

4.5 Ethical considerations

The fundamental ethical issue of this research relates to its structural design and, in particular, the stages which encounter aspects from the manipulative experimental approach. However to overcome this, within both phases and all of the stages the participants were never considered passive recipients of stimuli, nor are their responses viewed in a negative or hostile way. The participants were informed that they are not being given the full information and a prerequisite to the discussions is that participants provide consensual agreement to partake in the research and dialogue. Participants younger than consensual age were required to have parental consent in advance of the focus group discussions and were themselves agreeable to contribute as research participants. Parental consent was acquired via the signing of a parental consent form (please refer to Appendix 1.6) which was provided to parents several days in advance of each respective focus group discussion organised.

[54] For the Preliminary Phase, it is then revealed that the initial information had been manipulated and more data was collected. The results of this experimental approach informed the methodology taken for the subsequent main phase and its stages.

The initial ethical issues to arise relate to the selection of the original interviewees who were willing to provide the researcher with the information for the multimedia presentation. Both the interviewees and all the participants involved were expected to participate voluntarily. No recompense for partaking in the research was awarded other than refreshments, such as water and snacks, during the interview and discussion phases. It was ensured that the interviews take place in a quiet and private setting. For the one-to-one interviews, all interviewees were predisposed and willing to answer personal questions and to be visually recorded. This was ensured through verbal agreement of informed consent (please refer to Appendix 1.2).

Participants that required privacy, anonymity or their information kept confidential have and were not sought. However, pseudonyms were used with information provided by participants in the one-to-one interview, the focus group discussions and questionnaires. It was requested that all participants of the group discussions to complete a short questionnaire and provide informed consent to the facilitator using data from the questionnaire and data from the group discussions, directly associated with the speaker or not. Participants were also asked for informed consent for the raw audio and visually recorded data to be used. Once consensual agreement had been made, it was agreed that all data be stored indefinitely by the researcher. Participants were informed that the data from the interviews is to be used for the research and research dissemination purposes only, unless further consensual agreement is made to allow the data to be used for other purposes. A clause of this being that a request was made that data could be documented and published as part of the research indefinitely and that the data and photographs become the proprietary rights of the researcher.

The possibility was provided for interviewees and participants to opt out during the interview stage for any particular question/s that the participants were unwilling to have recorded and used in the study.[55]

Overall, by having all the appropriate safeguards in place, to the best of the facilitator's ability and knowledge, this research did not have any psychologically or emotionally harmful effects on anyone involved. Although the multimedia presentation is purposely altered, because the actual information was truthfully

[55] Although one participant from the second discussion of the Preliminary Phase was unable to attend the discussion to completion, all participants from the Preliminary Phase were agreeable and amenable to answering all the questions posed and allowing me to use all the information as requested.

revealed during the same time-period it was not found to have any negative effects on the participants. The participants were informed of the theme of the research beforehand; consequently, all ethical issues of concern were mitigated for to the best of the researcher's ability. Though unlikely, it is considered that if any negative effects were to occur, they would be greatly outweighed by positive effects. Since the completion of the Preliminary Phase, no ethical issues have been identified as having arisen, which suggests the ethical considerations taken thus far, have been appropriate and consistently applied.

A further concluding ethical consideration is the personal positioning of the researcher. It is plausible that because of the researcher's personal situation participants might have been reluctant to provide wholly honest answers to the questions for fear that it might offend the researcher. In contrast, it is also plausible that participants perceived themselves in a more neutral setting that facilitated them to be able to more outwardly express and self-reflect on their personal views on a topic that might otherwise be unspoken. The facilitator endeavoured to answer any questions pertinent and relevant to the research topic. Where necessary and where related to the theme of the research the facilitator's personal circumstance has and will be explained to participants. When queries relating to the origins or ethnicity of the researcher were made, the facilitator attempted to accommodate them from the researcher's subjective perspective. Where necessary the facilitator's personal opinion in relation to the research topic was kept at a minimal level so as not to unduly influence the discussions.

A final consideration is that the researcher as author continually sought to incorporate the raw data into the thesis with the clear endeavour to keep a required constituent of a Grounded Theoretical approach, 'the participant's voice and meaning present in the theoretical outcome' (Charmaz 1995, 2001; Mills *et al.*, 2006). Thus, by emphasising both facilitator and participants as contributors to the reconstruction of the finalized Grounded Theory model, the researcher's ethical obligation, to 'describe the experiences of others in the most faithful way possible' (Munhall, 2001: 540) can be seen as fulfilled to the best of the researcher's ability. Furthermore, even within such an interpretive framework, the study was conducted without compromising on the capacity of the researcher to analyse the data with as much of a degree of impartiality as is possible.

4.6 Limitations and reflections

As this research is conducted taking into account a strategy that incorporated a reflexive element and several phases involving numerous contributions, it is pertinent that a flexible approach be taken so as not to discredit the overall design expectations. Thus, the main hurdle encountered during the Preliminary Phase related to both the recruitment of interviewees, as well as participants for the discussions and questionnaires. It was found that in recruiting individuals for the multimedia presentation, all of the interviewees had more complex backgrounds and histories than were initially expected and categorized. Instead of subtracting from the research, this provided additional depth and was deemed beneficial influence to the end product, as well as the research overall. Scrutinized further, it is indicative of the true complexities of individuals' circumstances, which are not coherently or adequately reflected in legislation, social policy or even people's perceived notions of *Irishness*, including that of the researcher. It was a reaffirmation of the underlying uniqueness of each and every human being. As Parekh (2000: 43) contends, though perhaps overly simplistic, it is not a totally mistaken assumption to concede that 'human beings are naturally unique and that human uniqueness somehow underwrites moral and cultural diversity'. In relation to the four interviewees for instance, none had lived exclusively in Ireland for the duration of their lives, yet all had differing circumstances relating to the legislative criteria for Irish citizenship, either prior or post the 2004 ICR.

It was anticipated that there would be significant interest in public debate on 'Irish' identity, yet turnout was poorer than expected. The limitation of this also, was that those that participated showed an active interest in civic involvement and generally expressed a personal interest in the wider issues relating to identity. In the consideration of the recruitment of participants for the Main Phase, numerous agencies and organizations were canvassed as well as gatekeepers, such as the Dublin City Council. Nonetheless, canvassing campaigns and meetings with organization representatives proved to be unfruitful for most part. It would seem that a limiting factor in the success rate of canvassing might have been the ethical requirement to provide no tangible recompense for assisting as either gatekeeper for the recruitment of other organizations or as lead contact for the convening of a focus group discussion. This may not only be indicative of a detachment between academia, the public and organizations, but of a lack of recognition of reciprocal benefit between

academia and society in the Irish context. It was envisaged that following the Main Phase focus group discussions, individuals would be requested to partake in townhall style focus group deliberations on the re-conceptualization of *Irishness*. However, due to limitations of scope and time, this was not possible. Such an approach would be inclusive but also act as a way of fulfilling certain individuals' proactive desire to consider new processes of identification.

A component of the research methodology, as well as the thesis synthesis is described as proactively attempting to mitigate gender bias. Nonetheless, a limitation is that it does not take into account the diverse gendered orientations that exist and as such, limit the analysis of gender as an influencing factor that might shape differences in notions of *Irishness* as perceived by individuals. Furthermore, participants' sexual orientation, or potentially more importantly participants' perceptions on sexuality, are not explored within the study. The inclusion of such probing may have unembellished either complementary views concerning the more labile socially constructed nature of identity, as perceived by participants in Ireland, and/or it may have simply exposed certain paradoxical conditions. A further concern relates to the dominance of contributions from male participants which inevitably have a greater influence in determining not only projected perceived notions of *Irishness* but also the overall outlook of the culture becomes male-centrically constructed.[56]

Moving on from this chapter on methodology, and the previous chapters that discursively provide an overview on literature and research pertaining to *Irishness*, directly and less explicitly, the succeeding chapters present empirical data obtained in thematic sequence. The fifth chapter focuses attention on perceptions of being 'Irish'. It descriptively details being 'Irish'. In keeping with the sequence of discussion on identity formation, as presented in the initial chapters, and so as to maintain a level of procedural integrity as described above, the themes are described in a direct and relatively unprejudiced manner. The themes in the first findings and results chapter commence with family and in an interrelated succession develop to describe home, genealogical lineage, clan, feudalism, sport, parochialism, participation and community, as perceived by participants of the study.

[56] Where possible the researcher attempted to moderate such effects and take into account concerned raised by Oakley (1981; 2016) about 'the complex political and social relationship between researcher and researched.'

5 Participants' perceptions of being 'Irish'

The purpose of this, and the following findings chapters, is to explore information pertaining to perceived *Irishness* that emerges from the transcribed material documented from the recordings taken of the eight focus group discussions. When describing the characteristics of *Irishness* both the behavioural and the physical were discussed, the primary focus, however, being the behavioural and attitudinal. 'Irish' identity is viewed from the micro- to macro- level of social interaction and behaviour. The aim of this introductory results and findings chapter focuses primarily, though not exclusively, on participants' perceptions of being Irish. It details emergent themes that arose during the discussions in a fluid and coherent manner. The chapter progresses by describing in sequence notions associated with the central themes of family, clan, parochialism, sport and community.

Throughout the research, the importance of the role of direct family in identity formation is prevalent. Leading from this, discussion of the perceived role of the mother emerges. Hereditary links and the wider family links with 'Irish' identity are discussed. Home is presented as a central theme connected to family. This chapter then continues by linking conceptions of family, wider family and genealogical lineage, with notions of clan. Clan lineage is seen to extend back to pre-medieval times which connects with perceived views on social life, in the past. The notions of grudge and begrudgery are associated with feudalistic social life and feudal conflict. Evolving from the collective sense of clan and feudalistic allegiances, though perhaps not through expansion, is localized parochialism. Parochialism is shown to still exist, particularly in the context of Irish sport. From here the chapter considers how participation in sport is emphasized in several of the focus group discussions. Perceptions of sport are offered both through the act of participation and through spectatorship. The closing main theme discussed is community, within the subtext of traditional and rural Irish life.

5.1 Immediate family, cultural transmission and sacrifice

According to Inglis (2008: 5), 'the question of sameness and difference lies at the heart of social life… the most fundamental of these begins with seeing and understanding ourselves and other members of our family, clan, group, community or nation as similar, and others as different.' It is thus fitting to commence the findings from such a position. Consistent amongst most discussions was the topic of family (as reflected in the pilot study and recognised amongst the interviewees). The importance of family cannot be understated in relation to what people deem as important to them and also with regard to identity formation. This is evidenced in the responses both by the interviewees from the one-to-one interviews, as well as, by participants from the focus group discussions. Carroll sums up this in the post-viewing comment, "I think what was interesting though was the, eh, similarities, like of the four, kind of quite diverse people, like all more or less said that their family or somebody in their family was most important to them".

One aspect of family exhibited is in reference to the immediate family of participants and the internal behaviours, everyday habits and relationships expressed. Family is seen as a mechanism where more nuanced cultural aspects of everyday life are taught and learnt naturally. Similarly, for Byrne and O'Mahony (2012: *60f.*) family was historically and is associated with stability and connectedness. In the Drumcondra focus group discussion, Eddie quite insightfully acknowledges that, "…culture tends not to be a taught subject as it were, [it's] like something you absorb from your family, your friends, your relations, the people around you".

Tony describes what it means to be 'Irish' and expresses how *Irishness* within the family is reproduced and the forms it takes through socialization and familial choices.

Tony It's funny you know, 'cos choosing language, I know Molly and me have probably a similar decision making process, choosing the language option and the kind of music option and the, the learning option in my family, I found was – and not choosing Catholicism was extremely important, I had no relationship with the church neither do my children -

This control over specific forms of re/production of 'Irish' identity within the immediate family, even relative to wider family circles, is also evidenced at later stages within the discussions. Noteworthy is the importance of religious choice or non-choice (see below).

Dale describes how she personally identifies with *Irishness*: she has ascribed an association with *Irishness* to her sons and later how she, habitually through her lifestyle, creates a sense of everyday normality to being Irish.

Dale I gave my two boys Irish names…

YB Are they Irish, like Gaelic Irish names, or?

Dale Well like Donal and Aodhan,[57] but Aodhan is spelt the Irish way, (pause) em, (pause), I cook traditional Irish dinners, like bacon, cabbage and stew and stuff like that, they're my favourite dinners, and I like Irish music, rebel songs now not the country songs

This seems suggestive of an order of importance in relation to identifying with *Irishness*; the continuation of family, maintaining traditional cultural habits, as well as, proscriptive and prescriptive norms (Coleman, 1990: 247), such as those that underline the family role of the mother, and those for preserving personal association with nationalistic sentiments and sentimentalities.

This aspect of personally identifying with *Irishness* through family and habitual behaviours is also referred to by Dana in the Clondalkin focus group. Dana feels she is very family orientated and considers that she and her family "would be very family-ish". For instance Dana refers to her family life complementing media programmes which portray the family congregating on special occasions such as Christmas.

In the focus group discussion, Carroll provides a slightly different account; however, Carroll has similar thoughts on the perceived importance of immediate family on cultural transmission. Although Carroll describes how having parents of different nationalities can complicate what might be deemed as essential criteria for being Irish, she feels an obligation to appreciate her mother's Scottish identity.

[57] The names Donal and Aodhan are pseudonyms for Dale's son's names.

Carroll	So I feel like I have to be part of that, to, recognise her ordinary life or whatever, and that part of my family
Eddie	Well that's a different, it's a different if you like, culture too
Carroll	There's a lot of similarities but it's different you know
Eddie	Similar, but it's a different culture, and…
Carroll	Yeah, and you have to acknowledge that's part of you
Eddie	Well, you can only, you can only acknowledge it but… it, it is part of you… it's part of who you are
Carroll	I feel, if you weren't saying it, or you weren't part of it and my kids weren't born in Scotland but I take them back once a year, you know my family there, you know, where capable… because I think it's part of… my mother coming through, kind of thing, you know

Not only does this extract of conversation suggest an element of innateness in cultural diffusion through direct family lines, it indicates an obligation towards a sense of continuity and longevity that is trans-generational. It seems similar to White's (2008: 84) suggestion that 'Irish identity exists based on the accumulated legacy of previous generations and how they are interpreted today by the inhabitants of the island.' The comments also imply a level of assumed factuality of a familial or bloodline innateness associated with national identity, although such perceived notions do not overtly consider White's (2008: 84) summation who continues, 'thus, the search for blood origins is as fruitless in the Irish context as it is in other historical analyses of the origins of nations'.

Within the Drogheda focus group discussion, according to what is documented on the factsheet handed out, Izabela self-subscribes as Romanian (see Table 1.3). Having lost Izabela's own job in Romania and migrated to Ireland to start a new life, Izabela considers that "of course" Izabela and Izabela's children are Romanian. This is challenged by several of the other participants who question whether the temporal longevity of exposure to Irish culture and being brought up in Ireland will affect Izabela's children's sense of identity.

Toben That's fine, but you are assuming your children will be Romanian…

Izabela Yeah I speak in Romanian in the house, I, I spoke with my children about Romanian history, I -

Toben No, I understand that, when your children grow up… to a certain age… and they want to identify with a country… will you be surprised if the kids (choose to be Irish)?

Izabela I'm not sure, I'm not sure, if you eh, if you, speak with your children, about your country, not every day, but constantly and you, if you visit your country, your family there, because my mother will be Romanian, my brothers, my, my mother-in-law, all my family is in Romania, and I don't forget

Toben No yeah, I understand that

What is emphasized is how Izabela self actively transmits cultural information and exposure to members of Izabela's own immediate family so as to intentionally shape Izabela's children's identity formation in a way that may differ from being 'Irish'. The fact that Izabela recognises the self-requirement to proactively do this suggests that either the children themselves, though more likely their surrounding exposure to Irish society, will impinge on Izabela's wishes by influencing Izabela's children's sense of identity. Although Izabela is adamant to remain Romanian, like Toben, Irena feels that longevity and exposure might change how Izabela self-identifies by later stating following from the conversation above, "it's impossible you know, because you grow old with this country…" Izabela's desires to maintain strong connections with Romania seem to complement what Inglis and Donnelly (2011: 128*f.*) recognize: 'people may move around the world, they may be open to change and other people, but they also identify strongly with and remain attached to the place in which they grew up.'

What also seems worthy of attention is the manner in which the role of women in the family is described and stressed within several of the focus group discussions and also by the last interviewee, Kevin. Continuing from Kelsey's historical account of pre-

colonial Ireland as a more matriarchal kind of society, in the Clondalkin focus group, Dana compounds family and home with a description of the mother.

Dana But the woman like the, everyone like actually, there's, like talks about the typical Irish mother like… where the Irish mother does everything for, in the family home and all…yeah like it's actually like the, even do you ever see like the Royle family, like the tv series like and it's all, like they (slight pause)… it's an English programme like, but it's based on like the writer was, she was like, had Irish parents or whatever like, so it was eh, it was, like the woman in it is based on an Irish mother, like she does absolutely everything like… like the man does nothing like and she doesn't complain or anything like, the woman, like she raises the kids and what not but like your man from Iraq never, just said his da like, the, his mother never came into it at all like, and I bet yea she raised him and all like

There are intersecting aspects being discussed in this excerpt of conversation relating to reinforcing gender roles, media influence and perceived cultural specificities that may be influenced by the class perspective of the contributing participants of this focus group discussion. In this instance, evidenced is the interplay between culture and family. As Gilroy (1990: 114) describes 'culture is reductively conceived and is always primarily and "naturally" reproduced in families.' Further to this, Dana seems to be almost idealizing her notion of the Irish mother as possessing natural care giving characteristics to manage and maintain the proper functioning of family life. By pointing out that the interviewee, Dijwar with an Iraqi background didn't refer to the maternal side of Dijwar's own family in the multimedia production, Dana seems to assume that his mother must have been his primary carer. Interestingly, such a universalized assumption could be understood in contradiction with the supposed uniqueness of the strong, hardworking yet caring Irish mother.

The role of the mother in the family is also discussed in the Limerick focus group discussion. Initially in response to the contribution made by the interviewee Kevin in

relation to a general desire by most, irrespective of nationality, creed, race and religion, wanting to live peaceful and content lives, the response by Charlie is to say, "I think that most people's lives are caught up with, with eating, working and rearing families". The conversation then slightly shifts towards Irish society, indicative of the participant's desire to promote the prominence of motherhood in Irish society more specifically.

Charlie	And getting on, I think, you know about the Irish, going back centuries, emigrated, one thing is they did work and I think that comes from, it's like mothers go[ing] back centuries here, they always wanted their children to get on, it was nearly, they would starve… and save money to educate their children, and that is, I don't know whether it is in other cultures, but it is definitely in the Irish culture
Juliana	That it's well worth not spending money on the parents, we'll say, they wouldn't spend it on themselves but they would use it -
Adrian	They would yes
Charlie	To put their children to have a better standard of living

This historical recognition of sacrifice and hard work for the benefit of the succeeding generation, particularly by the mother and parents is quite revealing. On the one hand, it provides the sense that in Irish society although under Colonial rule, such behaviour would have challenged the hierarchical order of rule. When compared with the more stratified society of Britain, perhaps what is assumed is that the Irish needed to think more strategically about labour and climbing the social ladder, whereas within the aristocratic or bourgeois strata of British society social positions were assumed fixed.

An alternative way in which the comments made above might be interpreted, in relation to parental sacrifice, might be that it complements the ethos of Roman-Catholicism. Furthermore, within the context of the preceding conversation such an elevated valuing of parental sacrifice is seen as contrasting with other cultures which are perceived to have less of an ethos of hard work, familial care and education. If the latter were the case, by presenting what may be a partial view of Irish society, it could

be interpreted as quite ethnocentric. The conversation evolved as follows, which helps explore this further.

YB	…we could articulate almost the same perhaps, where for Eastern Europeans that are coming to Ireland… and they are making a lot of sacrifices, probably working in more menial jobs… then they are qualified for -
Charlie	Yeah, yeah
YB	And they are doing the same sacrifices with the intention that their children would perhaps have a better quality of life than what they might have had
Charlie	Umm

In this extract, the facilitator attempts to challenge the notion that mothers, parents and the Irish generally are more inclined to self-sacrifice through their labouring for the betterment of their children. In ways, what emerges is that, through differentiation and emphasis on 'insider' cultural values and norms, the member constructs their perspective that is ethnocentric and lacks an empathic view of the differentiated other either within or beyond Irish society. This notion is developed later in chapter seven.

5.2 Wider family as a lineage to *Irishness* and notions of home

Another way in which family is described is how, more broadly, family provides the bridge between the individual and Irish collective. Being born into the family innately fixes the individual to Irish society. Family, or more specifically having family lineage in Ireland, is considered to be a primary differentiating factor between being Irish and being an Irish citizen. (This aspect is developed further below in the description of becoming Irish, *jus sanguinus* citizenship). Ryan describes the difference between being 'Irish' and being an 'Irish' citizen by stating: "I think being Irish maybe suggests you have em, maybe a lineage way, there could be time, so you'd have lines say family, family before that, family before that in various… different parts of Ireland".

Similarly, although Kelsey states that she was born in Great Britain, in describing if being born in Ireland is an essential criterion for being 'Irish', or not, Kelsey justifies her own position in relation to her wider family circumstance.

Kelsey I was born in Birmingham and I would consider myself Irish, like I, lived over here and then I came back a few weeks later, or a couple of months later and I would, I'm, like my whole family's Irish, my aunties and me uncles, me grannie and me granddad, I wasn't born in Ireland and I can get that dual passport scenario as well, but, I am Irish so I'm gonna stick with my Irish passport, so yeah I'm no, I wasn't born in the Coombe or the Rotunda like you guys but, (slight pause) I think I'm Irish, do you consider me Irish?... Brady is shaking his head, like, 'I can't, she's not Irish' (laughter)…

Dana I never [hear] him say it again

Kelsey [what] would you think Dana?

Dana I don't know, it's like your whole family's Irish but you weren't born there and you live here, that's, that's Irish like… but like if you, if your ma and da are Irish but you grew up in England the whole time then you'd probably consider yourself English like

Both Kelsey and Dana recognize longevity or the temporal dimension of exposure to a specific society as trumping connections that one might have through family (this is later contradicted below in the Limerick group conversation). Kelsey asserts her right to be considered Irish by virtue of lineage. However, more nuanced aspects also emerge in relation to the micro-social interaction that occurs.

Although, as stated, Kelsey self-subscribes as being Irish, she seeks the approval of this from the other participants in the focus group discussion and even jokes at the idea that one of her peers might not be so forthcoming because of stances taken previously in the conversation. By being ambivalent and initially stating as a response to Kelsey's inquiry "I don't know…" Dana quite subtly elevates her status as superior to her peer but then affords and ascribes to Kelsey the right to self-claim to be Irish.

With the knowledge of Kelsey's life history differing from what might be perceived as the norm, this provides others the slightest of opportunities to differentiate, thus shifting power dynamics, which ultimately create subtle inequitable relations. This exemplifies the link between 'power-knowledge' and discourse in the creation of manners of self-policing amongst the population, as alluded to by Foucault (1977).

As an aspect of how someone can become Irish, Tony briefly mentions, "having a family here". However, after viewing the presentation, it was acknowledged in the Belfast focus group discussion that family was barely mentioned in relation to *Irishness*.

Molly	but they touched on things we didn't even touch on, we didn't even [talk] about community, about family, em, you know grandparents and that thing, they touched on that which is very close to us, not just
Tony	well, it goes without saying doesn't it?
Reagan	…you look at the start where, you know, where they were… talking about community, family you know, (pause) that's everybody's different perspective on what Irishness is and what their citizenship is

Molly appears to highlight the importance of the intergenerational aspect of family in relation to *Irishness* and its integral link with locality and community (developed further below), to which Reagan responds in a way that could infer that family is so integrally bound with *Irishness* that it does not need to be stated. Reagan's subsequent comment seems to acknowledge the multivariate ways in which *Irishness*, as well as, Irish citizenship can be perceived subjectively.

The assumption which may be held generally is that family is a core transmitter of particular value systems in term of specific ethical and moral positions (as introduced above). In one instance the impression is that the excuse of family connection trumping lived experience is rejected, as Reagan describes, "…I think of my cousin, he was born in London, grew up and moved to Canada but his mother's Irish… but he still says that he's, he has Irish family, yet, he'd never lived in Ireland in all his life (pause)". At a later point, when describing how someone can self-subscribe to being Irish, Tony seems to emphasize family as a factor justifying any claim to being Irish

by stating, "…most progressive people wouldn't have a problem with you saying I'm (an) Irish person, I can live here, I have family here…". However, in relation to this, what is particularly revealing in relation to the Belfast focus group discussion is the participants' recognition of their own position within their immediate family. With regards to changing views, with perhaps the rejection of parental standpoints and the suggestion of how this might reflect broader social change, here the participant Tony is discussing the rejection of traditional religious belief and choice of language.

Tony	Oh yeah, I'm in the minority in my family
Molly	So am I
Tony	There's no, I mean, I've got sixty-one cousins, sixty-two cousins and em, I would be the only one, one of them that is raising their kids as atheists… last count one girl who's eighteen and one who is eight, so there is no atheists in my family
Molly	There's no atheists, no socialists, no feminists in mine so -
Tony	And I'm the only Irish speaking family out of all of those, so we are atheists and Irish speaking... and the rest are catholic and English speaking

This exchange and disclosure suggests a broader desire to actively differentiate from 'others' not only outside their kin but importantly to differentiate away from the dominant position of their respective family group members, at least in relation to religion, political view, language affiliation or considerations of gender norms. What also emerges is that language, in the view of the participants, is a key attribute of a distinctive *Irishness*. Adopting Irish language seems to be a means of differentiation and a process of 'self-othering' away from his family group. One could infer too that Irish language is viewed in Bourdieusian terms as a form of cultural or linguistic capital that provides greater authenticity to claims of *Irishness* than merely the ability to speak English (as discussed below and in chapter nine).[58]

[58] For more on language, Irish (American) ethnicity and Bourdieusian concepts of capital, please refer to Sullivan (2016).

Such a leaning towards Irish language does not seem to be purely about communicating, understanding and deciphering, but expressly language, as overtly described above, is an instrument of action or power (Bourdieu, 1977: 645). In its contemporary form it goes beyond *national parallelism* associated with Celtic revivalism (de Frëine, 1978: 51-52; Tovey *et al.*, 1989: 16; Kiberd, 1995: 265), as it is not simply the countering of one language over another but rather capitalizing off both English and Irish proficiency. The acquisition of Irish language expands beyond linguistic competence to become a form of linguistic capital for the individual. As discussed in the second chapter, Lee (1989: 665) refers to a certain paradox which existed within Irish cultural revivalism and the utilitarian retention of English language. What is evidenced in contemporary times, is a shift from justifications based on the ideology of cultural revival and preservation that has slipped towards the more economic and neoliberal based rationale on cultural capital. Nonetheless, speaking Irish language is a matter of choice and exposure, unlike more supposedly innate constructed identifiers, such as physiological traits, which means one of the qualities of the Irish language is its potential as a more inclusive, rather than exclusive or divisive, form of identifier.

One of the driving forces that influenced Dale's desire to have her family repatriate to Ireland from Britain is seen as the desire to be closer to all of Dale's wider family in Ireland. Although having been raised in England, an association with Ireland as home is made through both experience of visiting Ireland on holidays and cultural exposure to people from within the Irish emigrant community in England. Unlike the assumption that is mentioned earlier in the Clondalkin focus group discussion (see above), longevity of stay in Britain does not seem to have had an impact on Dale's sense of self-identification; family and the idea of home seem to influence more powerfully Dale's choice of affiliation.

Dale …so all my mother's friends were Irish, all my friends over there, they, their parents were Irish, every holiday we've ever had as a child was in Ireland, we would holiday twice a year, then we moved over here and I was like, I was actually the one who made my mother come home, I begged her, "please I wanna go home, back home, cos over there" -

Maebh You call it home even though you were always in England…

Dale Do-yea-know so, em, because I, but my father was very over protective of me over in England and we'd been mugged a few times and stuff like that, and I don't blame him like, but when I came here I had so much freedom and all our family were over here and I love them dearly like, you know, my cousins, and even my friends then that I was friends with back then in nineteen ninety six when we were on holidays, they're my best friends still here now in Ireland, like, do-yeah – no so… I just love it here

There seems to be a real sense of association of the notion of home with family and friendship even though Dale spent most of her younger formative years in England, which she might have referred to equally as home, yet didn't. Home, family and friendships seem to combine to provide the emotional justification to love being 'Irish' in Ireland.

Parentage, family and home, as well as the importance of language, are also interrelated in an anecdotal account provided by Machie in the Drogheda focus group discussion. In this instance, the anecdotal account provided is somewhat inverted because they are being looked at within the African context.

Machie I know an Irish guy, I met him eh, in a night spot, an Irish guy, he's white, he's an Irish guy… and he turns to me and says "are you from Nigeria?" "Yes, I'm from Nigeria" and he starts to speak my language to me, like one of the languages… and I looked at him like, 'hang on a sec., where does this guy come from?' and he told me that yeah, he told me that he was actually born in Nigeria, he was born in the Northern part of Nigeria, his whole family was there

YB Ok

Machie [For example] the American guy, and he was born in Nigeria but he's an Irish person so he's not relating to the fact that even though his parents are Irish, he's now living here, but we were, he thinks Africa is, "oh yeah Africa is home, you know that's where I'm from" but he's still Irish, I would see him and say he's an Irish person straight away, but he says, on his passport he is from Nigeria and since when a situation like that, even up to today, there are a lot of people that now that ah, from a certain (long pause) diaspora…

Family, sense of home, the acquisition and proficiency of a specific language, place of birth and the possession of Nigerian citizenship, are described. What appears evident as a key determining factor to allow the subject to be considered Nigerian relates to his outward appearance. Although when the question is posed to Machie, as to whether he can ever be considered Nigerian, Machie responds with an admission that shifts towards the notion of hybrid identities, by stating, "in my eyes, yes, he can be Nigerian, there are many Chinese-Nigerians right now, yep".

Thus identity, as seen from the negotiation of self-subscription by an 'insider' and from the ascription onto the individual by an 'outsider', is seen to be contestable. In fact, the notion of hybridity is challenged within the conversation when Emmanuel interjects to ask, "did you, did you say, Chinese-Nigerian?" to which Machie responds, "yeah" and Emmanuel concludes quite categorically, "that means they're not Nigerian". This rejection, of even the ascription of a hybrid identity, reinforces what might be implied from Machie's comment; that a hybrid identity does not equate equally to what is perceived as a purer form of singular national identity (further discussed in chapter seven). It seems to be a definitive rejection and closing off of what Bhabha (1990a: 211; 1990b: 189) describes as a 'third space which enables other positions to emerge.' Emmanuel adamantly rejects the notion of this third space where new negotiations of the meaning of representation might create unique identities by displacing the histories that constitute them (Bhabha, 1990a: 211; 1990b: 189).

Friendliness, one of the attributed characteristics of *Irishness*, emerged during the discussion on family and home in the Drogheda focus group discussion. As most of the participants have migrated to Ireland, it gives them a unique perspective on such topics. Although the conversation is initiated by a person who perceives himself and would likely be perceived as Irish, Diarmuid is quite cautious in his opening remarks and distances himself from the viewpoint of the Irish being particularly friendly.

Diarmuid From the tourists I've spoken to they say the Irish are particularly friendly…

Irena But for example for me, I think that home for them is like just like a case, my home is my castle, and it's very difficult to go inside the home when you are a stranger, for them, when you are a closer friend, it's ok, but yet now when you are a stranger, and you are not very close, home is closed you know… you're friendly on the street

Izabela Yes on the street, in the park… but home is, is closed for strangers

Dillon This is probably why the pub is a hub… because people don't tend to use their homes to entertain as much as, in South Africa you had more at home you know… your friends would visit you -

Izabela I think… not just with stranger, between Irish

The conversation soon shifts to discussing Christmas and the dynamics of family and home in the Irish context.

Izabela How it was in Ireland and here in Ireland, nothing happens in Christmas on the street… it does in the house between the family, but in our country I think the, maybe in France, I'm not sure maybe in France but in Romania, Spain and Nigeria, in Togo, everybody visiting and sing songs and you know

There is a clear distinction made here between Irish cultural activities at the season of Christmas, in comparison with other countries of which the participants have first-hand experience and knowledge. Home seems to be more clearly demarcated into the private sphere, and is not shared beyond family. The public space, particularly the public house, is designated as an alternative location for socializing with friends and acquaintances beyond family.

Overall, identity is closely bound with that of parental influence on cultural transmission and the transference of specific value systems which occurs during a child's development within the family. Although the notion of family may be perceived as the basic unit of social organization, it may not be the primary influencing factor on identity formation. The social construction of how one self-identifies and is identified by others would seem to rely on how one frames one's own perceived position in relation to a combination of family, home, locality and community. Certainly with changing and more diverse family structures, one would expect that a child's development of core aspects of their identity will occur through socialization beyond the family. That is to say, institutions, such as education and friendship, are likely also to play an increased influence on an individual's self-identification.

5.3 Genealogical lineage and clan

Relevant to the topic of family and genealogical lineage is the notion of clan. In the Clondalkin focus group discussion, a distinctive Irish ethnicity is somewhat ironically joked about in association with family names. Names identify an individual as belonging to an identifiably Irish family. Linking in with the notion of family, names and cultural transmission (discussed above), family names are described as symbolizing descent from an Irish clan. Being "a Murphy, O'Connor, O'Brien" (Kelsey) appears to connect the individual to a sense of 'traditional' *Irishness*.

Kelsey It's like, you just like saying, 'well you're obviously like em, a brand of Irish, like there's no sort of (slight pause) international in there like, I'm [Kelsey's own surname], that's kind a German so like I'm obviously like some sort of in, like outbred

Cillian	An outbred (laughter)
Kelsey	Like your Scottish name, you're like outbred (referring to Dana's name), Kathleen you're screwed (laughter)…
Dana	Yeah, it's like em, yeah if you were like a Murphy or something it's like you've been Irish like for like hundreds and thousands of years or something… that's what people would probably say… whereas if you had a name that was outside Ireland, you'd be like, "ah well maybe your grandparents came over… on a boat or something (slight laughter) (pause)
YB	So how would you describe that distinctive Irish ethnicity then?
Kelsey	Well you can kind a say like, 'oh he's Murphy', or whatever (slight laughter)… so you can say like, well obviously he's a descendant from like an Irish clan… where like I might've (slight pause), like I mean I'm kind of more of a Norwegian brand, kind of brought over, so like I'm kind of, I was probably more, I was probably a Viking, like my ancestors (laughter)… and it is that I, I actually have more of a Viking ancestral, where Murphy would be more of an Irish clan"
Christine	A true Celt kind a, isn't it?
Brady	Celt yeah
Kelsey	Yeah, don't know (slight laughter)… and if you're like, say your name was like Conor, like you dropped the 'O' like, so you took the 'C'" (slight laughter)… do-yea-know what I mean? (slight laughter)… I don't know what I do, trying to judge people by names, do you know like

In this instance, clan is not only seen as a grouping of people within the current timeframe, it has connotations of longevity over an historical epoch, is seen as trans-

generational and seems quite situated within a fixed time and the geographical space of Ireland. Synonymous with notions of being a member of an Irish clan is the idea that, one is affiliated with Ireland over multiple generations going back to pre-Christian times. Apparently, family name becomes a label or an identifier of a person's association with the perceived notion of a family or clan. In this context, notions of family and clan match certain interpreted definitions of kinship as being reliant on 'irreducible genealogical connections' (Fortes, 1969: 52; Strathern, 1975: 21). By self-referencing as 'an outbred' because Kelsey's doesn't necessarily possess such a family name, and instead possesses a name that may have come from abroad, Kelsey is self-conceived as somewhat of an 'outsider' and differentiates from 'others' that might be members of an Irish clan, legitimated through their surname.

In the Coolock focus group discussion, the connection between family and clan is reiterated in direct relation to the participants' own lives. Although taking place in response to conversation on the Traveller community, it is implied more generally to include the settled community.

Aileen	But I think that that sense of clan goes through families, you know, whether traveller or not in Ireland, we in our family, this year, now not my family but my cousins, they had five new babies this year, everyone's delighted because it makes our clan stronger
Tierney	Yeah, you're right
Aileen	You know, it reinforces our clan… makes us stronger like you know

In this extract of conversation, family and clan seem to be compounded into one, almost making them synonymous. The slight distinction rests between what might be the immediate family and the extended family. The sense that a numerical increase of offspring within the clan group strengthens and reinforces the clan would seem to emphasize the importance of bloodline connections and imply a greater loyalty based on wider familial interconnections.

5.4 Clan, feudalism and grudges

A positive characteristic that emerges is the notion of loyalty and also the sense of kinship paternalism. Clan is seen as a very important characteristic of *Irishness* and according to Emmet, "family is at the root of everything that we are really". In contrast to this, a further aspect of family is initially introduced in the Coolock focus group discussion within a thread of conversation that commences with "grudge" (or begrudgery). Similarly Inglis (2006: 34) flags such a condition within the context of self-indulgence by describing it in Irish culture as the 'habit of putting people down, belittling those who are ambitious and begrudging their success.' Although Inglis (2006) attributes it to Catholic culture, self-deprecation and self-denial, in this instance the sense of the Irish having a propensity towards begrudging 'others' is related to the association with family feuds, feudalism historically and reference to the travelling community in contemporary society (as introduced immediately above). Seemingly, inter-family grudges are seen as a primary motive for the formation of the clan, parochialism, and the aspect of wider community life. This would also seem to manifest itself in the participation and spectatorship of sports today.

Tierney	Grudge is a huge part
Grainne	But even the GAA and the parish
Tierney	Go to any wedding in Ireland -
Emmet	So loyalty then
Tierney	There's grudge being played out
Emmet	Loyalty (slight pause) -
Grainne	To your community
Peadar	That's the opposite… the other side of it
Emmet	Well even down to, as you said, communities or, whether the travelling community or even families -
Aileen	Or your sporting club or
Emmet	Your loyalty can be split in a family and that can split families for years
Tierney	You're with us or against us

Emmet Yeah, so loyalty would be yeah something that

Aileen It's demanded

Conlaoch But yet there is the "geish", I mean the, here you have an absolute responsibility for the incidence, if you give birth to a child, you have an absolute responsibility for rearing that child for the rest of their lives and this works to the whole society, the, this is imbedded in our society and there's responsibility for caring for your clan or your people and this is where your grudge comes in

This extract highlights how the participants unanimously consider that the notion of family expands into clan and community. Several participants seem to suggest that this creates conflict because of what they perceive as a primal sense of grudge that ensues with such social formations.

Continuing from this clannish, feuding and grudging perspective of Irish life is the closely related sentiment of 'begrudgery' or belittlement. What could be perceived as a negative notion of *Irishness* was barely touched upon in all of the focus group discussions and when discussed by two groups, it was either briefly stated or implied. The notion was directly stated but not given space to be developed or actively continued by the contributor in the Coolock focus group discussion. In partial answer to describing characteristics of *Irishness*, Emmet exclaims, "we've a great propensity for begrudgery" yet it was not followed up nor did other participants refer to it.

In the Drumcondra focus group discussion, a subtle comment is made during the conversation which focuses on becoming Irish. Although when asked about the criteria for being 'Irish', the participants immediately began reflecting on the imaginary 'outsider' wishing to become 'Irish', and selecting the criteria according to what they perceived would be required for that stranger to enter into being Irish. It is within this context that a subtle reference might be inferred to relate to the specific notion of begrudgery.

Ciara I think if you are Irish, if you adopt the kind of (cough), the kind of traditions of Ireland and the behaviour, like we saw, participation, being willing to talk and share

with other people and, kind a fully participate in Irish society, I think that, that makes you Irish, irrespective of where you originally come from, I mean you can have a dual, you can be Irish and Nigerian at the, at the same time I think

Ryan Yeah… yes, just not be, too confident

This somewhat flippant remark at the end of the snippet from Ryan is quite significant. It is suggestive of a level of social control. It demands of an individual, in this case the example provided being an Irish-Nigerian which in itself is also quite revealing, that they must not be too confident as it might evoke in members of society a feeling of begrudgery towards the said individual.

5.5 Sport and parochialism

The notion of parochialism develops on from the bloodline association with clan and draws more association with locality of place. A similar term that relates to both is the conception of 'tribe'. In the Clondalkin focus group discussion, although the discussion was hosted in a city suburb and most of the participants are in all probability from the surrounding catchment area, they appear to make reference to a more rural image of Ireland as a parochial society

Dana …like the village and all, everyone has like a couple of Gaa[59] pitches each

Cillian Yeah, the last like -

Dana Everyone has a good few fields like

Christine You know the county colours and all… it's all very tribal isn't it or something

Kelsey Yeah

This idealization of rural Ireland and village life is a form of reverting to an earlier time. The notion of parochialism being quite discrete from familial or bloodline ties is reinforced in the anecdotal account provided by Juliana, in his description of

[59] "Gaa" being the spoken form of GAA (Gaelic Athletic Association)

experiences he had when he played sport (this link with sport is further developed below in this chapter).

The conversation progresses out of a discussion which considers the juxtaposition between rural and urban life in Irish society.

Juliana …I was kind a big into the GAA cos it kept me sane but I'll tell you I was the outcast where I grew up because none of my friends were in the GAA. None were any good at it, they didn't [play] hurling, I was walking down the street with a hurling stick (pause), a guard actually, I was stopped, now that I think of it, it happened twice maybe three times, I was stopped by a guard, [s/he] said "where are you going with that?"… now this, this is the north side of Dublin… "where do you think you are going with that?" "I'm playing a match" "who do you play for?" and I got these, all these questions and the gas thing was I was playing for a club six miles away and I was asked why I wasn't playing for a local one cos he wasn't from Dublin, by his accent… and his experience was you play for your parish -

Maebh Yes

Juliana …it would seem [a] very parochial society here… I live now in the middle of the countryside, and I play a bit of hurling when I got there, it wasn't hurling like all mud and all (laughter) and… madness, but one parish, I had to play for this particular club down the bottom of [location], that's where I had to play, there was a buddie of mine playing in a club a few miles up the road and we ended up playing them one day and I ended up marking my best buddie, you know we gave each other plenty of stick but there were cousins on opposing sides and they were taking lumps off each other and they

	don't talk to each other and it's (pause), I think that's a very… because of where I came from and my background in playing sports I couldn't understand this taking lumps off lads
Adrian	Ah yeah
Juliana	Especially when you are related to them… we did, what school we went to, you know

This excerpt of conversation is quite detailed and nuanced. As mentioned, there seems to be recognition of a different approach to parochialism between city life and life in the countryside. There would also appear to be an understanding of parochialism that stems from rural life and transcends notions of clan or feudalism based purely on family or bloodline. However, the final comments imply a sense of social stratification. Where one might assume social hierarchy is pronounced in urban life, it would seem correspondingly present in rural life. Specific locality, social background and particular schooling attendance would seem to determine the outlook and ethos of the playing styles of individuals, in particular, players' propensity towards playing physically and aggressively for their paris team, irrespective of their familiarity and even bloodline relationship with members of the opposition.

Evidenced in the extracts above is not only the prominence of Irish sport and its associations in shaping participants' sense of affiliation with *Irishness*, but such evidence provides substantiation of the successfulness of what Crowley (2005: 138) describes as the codification of national sports in both creating and perpetuating a modern sense of 'Irish' identity. In the Drumcondra focus group discussion participants converse about how they personally identify with *Irishness* by combining sport with the concept of parochialism. This seems to apply particularly to what would be considered Irish sports such as Gaelic football, hurling and handball.

Ryan	I think sport would be a big identifier, the Gaelic games, where you have, you know, hurling and football…
Carroll	Handball
Ryan	The small parishes, right across Ireland, you know, that accounts for an awful lot of people, kids right up to, you

know… young adults playing sport, it's very typically Irish, I mean you [don't] find it, those types of sports anywhere outside of Ireland… rugby as well, of course, in lots of provinces, bringing people together, you know what I mean, and then the national team, it's around the national team… then more of that, later would be soccer but, em, they're typically and uniquely Irish

Ciara Very, very unifying as an organization

Ryan Yeah very unifying, yeah, bring a lot of people together… a ritual like that

Eddie Well I, I think you put your finger on it, I think the uniqueness… of the Gaelic football and the hurling, I think, is a very important factor

Ryan Yeah, this uniqueness, that there nowhere else… whereas rugby is obviously international… like getting soccer and all that (pause)

The referencing of sport appears to show a division between sports that are considered indigenous being more attached to parochial life, whereas sports that have been imported are more closely related to the provincial, the nation and international stage. There is also a relationship with sport at a parochial level and a collective engagement that seem trans-generational and binding. Where there may be feudal, familial or parochial allegiances it is played out, in a coalescing way, under the common banner of a particular sport. Overall, sport and its institutions are portrayed in a very positive light perhaps because of this process of inter-clan-like unification.Such unification through sport is seen as ritualized in the lifecycle of the Irish. However, such an idealized view of the role of sport neglects consideration of those who do not partake in such sports, or sports in general, thus becoming designated outside of the Irish clan, family or community.

5.6 Sport, ritualized participation and culture

Participating in sport in a ritualized way is later seen as an appropriate means of integration when the question of becoming Irish is partially answered proactively. Following the somewhat flippant remark quoted earlier (Ryan states, "Yeah… yes, just not be, too confident") regarding how people can become Irish, the facilitator questions what participation in sport might entail.

Ryan Just whatever happens in terms of ritual, support would be one… I mean, I think no matter where you are in the world you join up with sports clubs that, you know, that kind of thing as a way of getting integrated

Ciara Or even, or even not necessarily participate, but just… taking an interest

Ryan Yeah, it's a great way to meet up with people

In support of the conversation interaction above, participation in sports is seen to be 'native' to Ireland by Grainne (Coolock focus group discussion). Grainne appears to provide a strong sensibility towards self-defining as Irish through her participation in sport, amongst other cultural activities. Grainne compares her sense of national identity with that of her other European friends, "who consider themselves not to have a national identity. I feel quite passionate about my national identity, I am Irish, I play Irish sports, I speak my Irish language, I play the bodhrán, I do things that are very typically and, that I have chosen to do because I feel like they're part of my heritage". Grainne lists sport as the first cultural attribute to being Irish, thereby giving the sense that it has a high importance, in this instance even above speaking Irish language. This association of participating in specific sports as a criterion for *Irishness* is later challenged by Emmet who perceives it less as a general criterion and more as a choice by the individual. Nonetheless, participating in specific sports does seem to warrant a sense of greater authenticity towards being Irish.

Credence is given to this notion of participating in perceived Irish sports and even expanded further in the same focus group discussion when Tierney advises that the second interviewee Dijwar, ought to go down to the local GAA club. Tierney states, "but you see, I would say maybe he needs to go down to the GAA club because there is music…and all of that stuff, is, is, rampant…in that setting…that maybe he doesn't

know about it". Within this intervention the sense is that the role of the local GAA club is defined as a space for exposing people to cultural traditions that go beyond sports. There is a slight onus on the interviewee Dijwar to actively search for such activities with the implication that by participating in these cultural activities within Irish society, the interviewee Dijwar, or anyone for that matter, is more likely to feel better integrated.

In contrast to this notion of sport and participation being a key component and almost prerequisite of *Irishness*, it was noted in the Naas focus group discussion, with primarily younger participants that sport was scarcely mentioned in the conversation. When this was highlighted during the conversation on how participants personally identify with *Irishness*, the young participants transferred the attention away from themselves personally and shifted attention to famous sports personalities. This may likely be because within this group their personal interests don't involve sport. However, what is subsequently stated is revealing. Colin seems to justify why sport hasn't been mentioned by stating, "it's not something that like, I know very, very, a lot of Irish people that don't do any sport at all". This statement reveals that for Colin, *Irishness* is apparently not defined by participating in sport, irrespective of the type of sport. It challenges the assumption made above in the Drumcondra group discussion, and emphasizes that individuals can have a more diverse range of interests while maintaining a full claim to being Irish. This is further supported when the participants discuss how someone can become 'Irish'. Although participation is recognised as an important aspect of becoming Irish, participation in any sport is not seen as having considerable importance. When asked by the facilitator which sport would be best for someone to join in, Alan qualifies the question by stating "… that Irish people are participating in?", to which Glenn responds, "it doesn't even have to be a sport".

In the Coolock focus group discussion, sport is mentioned as a component that feeds into a perceived unique Irish heritage and culture. The conversation progresses with an expression of concern that generally associated cultural traits (such as sporting activities) may become "diluted" with time and the arrival of what are termed by the participants themselves "new Irish". Emmet questions whether over time and into the future, "will the uniqueness of our heritage -", Tierney interjects, "diluted" and Emmet continues, "our sport, our music, our dance, our words, will that be diluted?...". In response to this, several other participants disagree, however. What is

more revealing is the fact that the conversation revealed such a sense of concern over cultural reduction with changing demographics and migration flows. There would also seem to be recognition of the inevitability of change, without perhaps dilution, but reluctance for change, nonetheless. (This aspect of change is further elaborated on later).

Sport is barely mentioned in the Belfast focus group discussion. It is initially considered when describing characteristics of *Irishness*, but similarly to above, sport is pooled together with other characteristics which might be considered stereotypical considerations. It is included along with "the usual cultural stuff" as stated somewhat dismissively by Tony, such as, dance, music, Catholicism, language, Guinness and the consumption of alcohol as a prerequisite more generally.

Although there is a general consensus of agreement displaying a somewhat indifferent attitude towards such characteristics within this focus group discussion, contradictions emerge. These contradictions are primarily observable in a certain dismissiveness of, yet reliance on, what might be considered specific cultural characteristics in the construction of the participants' own identities, as well as the promotion of such construction by members of their immediate family. An example of this is the response Molly gives in answer to what it means to be 'Irish':

Molly	My children are Gaelgóirs, it was a decision that I made that I wanted them to have a connection to Ireland that was a language connection, and their identities, I suppose… they have a strong cultural identity because of Irish education and sports that they play
YB	And then, would that cultural identity come back to the initial question that I had asked, or, how would you describe that cultural identity, that strong cultural identity I suppose?
Tony	Well, as I say, it's language and sport -
Molly	Yeah…
Tony	Language, sport and music

In this instance what seems observable is a combination of socially acquired abilities that are specific to *Irishness*, being actively encouraged and reproduced within the immediate family environment. So although there may be recognition of these characteristics as being somewhat overly conventionally perceived, there is also the desire to culturally appropriate them into the participants' daily lives and that of their family in order to promote them and also to develop a strong sense of cultural identity in their children.

As mentioned previously sport is considered closely linked with tribal and parochial life, which also can be seen in a more contemporary light in relation to community. In the Drogheda focus group discussion, conversation about sport is described as related to a distinctive Irish ethnicity in a revealing way. Initially the general topic of sport is introduced by Dillon, who self-subscribes as South African but has lived in Ireland for many years. Dillon refers to sport on several occasions within the Drogheda focus group discussion, as an example of the Irish as having a particularly enthusiastic propensity towards supporting national team sports, as well as, a strength of pride. In support of this, within the Coolock focus group discussion, Tierney asserts that a characteristic of *Irishness* is that, "we're sporting, we're sporting".

> **Dillon** …as an outsider come in, of Irish extraction, my grandfather was Irish, em, I, my perception of, of the Irish is that, they wear the green jersey with enthusiasm, whether it's sports or, or cultural activities, Irish dancing at home and abroad, and eh, anyone who dons that green jersey with enthusiasm and pride, eh, I would deem to be Irish…obviously there are many different types of Irish, there's people who are sort of would eh, very strong in the Irish language or republicanism, or they're not as strong…even if you take the Irish rugby team

This quite simplistic notion of being deemed Irish merely by expressing enthusiasm in associating with national teams seems superficial, yet it touches upon what could be deemed as a core aspect of *Irishness* namely, the less tangible and more intangible

characteristics: desire, wanting and feelings of belonging (as discussed in chapter seven).

Dillon provides a further pseudo-'insider'/'outsider' perspective on sport in the Irish context but he initiates the conversation by relating it to feelings and emotions associated with being obstinate, which may relate to feelings of grudge or begrudgery (as discussed earlier).

Dillon One particular perception I have of the Irish is I suppose a stubborn determination… whether in sport or business, and they see it all, and em, they see that they can run around a rugby match or whatever, they can play beyond themselves, they have a particular propensity to, determination

Emmanuel It's like they prefer more physical activities, like in sports, eh, when I think of the rugby, and GAA… they like that, those sports more than football because I believe that rugby and GAA are more physical, and more to do with the physical than -

Dillon They succeed at it as well

Emmanuel Boxing, yeah, you know boxing too

Irena But probably not individual sports, more group sports… ah, soccer, or rugby, or something no one except two teams are playing together, you know that… 'cos the rest are (slight pause) givers, no, yeah, yes… but for me this is excellent cos, I can go to the match and I'm not afraid about my life, you know, because this is a family day, everybody are coming with children, with children that…is amazing that I'm not afraid… after the match will be bamm, hit me (laughter)… you know this is good yeah

These concluding statements in relation to sport in the Irish context are seen in contrast with sporting events in other societies as portrayed from cross-cultural

knowledge attained through past experience. Irena appears to provide the sense of sport for the spectator in Ireland as quite unique in that it is accommodating of family and in extension a more communal event that is open and inclusive rather than, closed to specific groupings within the community.

Similarly in the Coolock focus group discussion, participation in a team, sports or otherwise, is emphasized over individual participation.

Peadar Irish people make great team players, that was another thing that comes out, that Irish…

Tierney Too right we do

Aileen I'd say we do, yeah… we've sort of, we're steeped in our games, like you know kids may not be great at doing PE[60] in school or whatever but they will go an' play GAA after school, play soccer or even on the road… it's you know, you're playing kick the can[61] and you've two teams, you play tag and you've two teams like you know

Peadar I don't know, maybe

Aileen So I think for the time, and that'll probably change

This conversation alludes to not only the prominence of team activities but also how they are instilled at a young age. The final statement is quite revealing as it suggests a subtle sense of change either in relation to games being played in the playground or on the street and/or, that games might move away from being team orientated. Within it there is a slight sense of reminiscence, nostalgia and with it also, loss.

Sport as a spectacle, GAA particularly, enters into the conversation within the Leixlip focus group discussion, as a vibrant cultural aspect that reinforces perceptions of a distinctive Irish ethnicity. When asked how sports would contribute to a description of a distinctive Irish ethnicity, initially reference is made to GAA, athletics and participation in sports; however, in answering the same question later, the conversation discussed the cultural aspect of viewing sports communally.

[60] PE as analogous to Physical Education
[61] Kick or tip the can and tag are games associated with young children that are team based.

Noel Well I suppose like, well Sunday is like Croke Park, like the Gaelic matches, [the] Sunday game live on RTÉ[62]… and like, most people like, when the all-Ireland is on, everyone kind a sits down and watches it… it would be like -

Blathnaid And goes to the pub and watches it

Noel The Superbowl in America, kind a like that… except an Irish version

Drawing a comparison with American cultural activities ties in with an aspect alluded to by Noel slightly earlier in the conversation whereby there is the acknowledgement of American cultural transmission and exposure through media consumption of popularized TV programmes in particular. This is seen in contrast to traditional cultural habits but as a feature of more contemporary ways of life in Ireland that are more culturally diversified.

Similarly, referring to the occasion of participating in the spectacle of sport, Blathnaid provides an anecdotal account to describe what she seems to perceive as a distinctive Irish ethnicity.

Blathnaid Yeah, the em, I think it was a few years ago when Katie Taylor was in the Olympics and she was, on like doing her final fight and we were coming home from the beach and we were in the middle of nowhere and there was this little pub but, and it was the time when she was about to start her match, her fight so we, me and like all my cousins and my aunty, and we were all like in a big car, we all went in and there was like piles of people there and everyone was like, celebrating, everyone was just like hugging like random strangers, (laughter)… and everyone was really happy and it was so nice and I thought it was quite Irish

YB And where was this in Ireland, but it wasn't -?

[62] RTÉ is an abbreviation of Raidió Telefís Éireann, the national television and radio broadcaster.

Blathnaid Yeah, it was in Kerry

Noel Yeah ‘cos like, we don’t get like a lot of success -

Blathnaid Yeah (laughter), that’s true

Noel In sports like, ‘cos like even soccer or stuff like when Thierry Henry did the hand ball thing, everyone was like, ‘oh my god’, but like… it wasn’t even as if they were going to win anyway but they kind of just tried to make up an excuse that they would’ve won (slight laughter) or something

This conversation seems to portray an archetypally Irish pub or communal scene while watching a sport. It seems to capture the typified communal dimension of social interaction that occurs during such sporting occasions. The introduction of the soccer occasion supports the notion that it is less about the specific sport in question, as an indigenous sport or otherwise, and more about the social setting, interaction that occurs, shared memories and feelings that are created in relation to the sporting event. It provides for a sense of collective nostalgia that is shared by those within the assemblage of persons who are considered to be ‘Irish’. The conversation continues by focusing on the aspect of celebrating with people that are seen as strangers in juxtaposition to this wider ‘insider’ collective. Although it is quite plausible to assume people around the world will celebrate together even with strangers during certain events, what is noteworthy is the remark pertaining to physical affection through hugging. It seems to suggest that the Irish might perceive themselves as quite reserved in expressing themselves through physical affection in comparison to other societies, yet occasions when people deviate from this social rule creates a pronounced component of memory, such as those associated with celebrating a sporting occasion in a pub.

Michael later appears to identify with *Irishness* and attributes feelings of nostalgia that continue to affect the lives of the participant. Within the conversation Michael points out that, not only playing sport but also sport as a spectacle and social activity commences at a young age, “Gaa is a big part of my childhood, ‘cos like I watch it with dad and I play it myself so it kind of influenced me” (Michael).

As above, sport as a spectacle is seen to evoke a sense of ritual, nostalgia and also pride in Emmet. In the Coolock focus group discussion, Emmet describes personally identifying with *Irishness* by making a connection with sport as a spectacle and the seasonal cycles, in particular the summer months, which conveys this sense of yearly ritual that is collectivized and may link to nostalgic memories relating to different phases of periods of people's lives.

Emmet I think it would be probably (slight pause), the sport for me, there's a huge amount of (slight pause), pride… I think, especially when you, you know you come to the summer and the championship is on, and now, you know we're broadcasting our games across the world and you're sitting there, (slight pause) actually during the summer, there was a great thing on twitter, I don't know whether anyone followed it

Grainne It was brilliant, it was absolutely brilliant

Emmet All these people, suddenly discovering hurling… and the comments were brilliant

Grainne Sky Sports[63]

Emmet But it was such, the pride reaming o' these people, you know, the people "was it, is it, is this a sport?"… "is this game over when somebody is dead?"

Tierney It's our national -

Emmet You know and I think sport, generally, when we get to the height of the summer especially with the championships… and all, that is hugely Irish and uniquely Irish, and there's a pride in it, there's a pride in it now especially now that the rest of the world is getting to see it… you know and you're just explaining it simply to people, you know what's going on

[63] Sky Sports is a monthly subscription and/or pay-per-view channel part of Sky Corporation.

Tierney We're ritualistic, aren't we? In that way, we're ritualistic in that regard

Emmet yeah, we still march the two lines…

Tierney We have to go to the pub before the game, sing the same songs at the end of the game, and… we get it all then and we dust it, and we do the whole thing the next season, season by season we're very ritualistic…

This excerpt reinforces comments that were made in the Drumcondra focus group discussion in relation to sport, parochialism and the Irish using sport in a ritualized manner. The spectacle of sport in such a ritualized pattern could be seen as a form of maintaining memory or building nostalgia. It may also be a way of cultural transference that is trans-generational. Conceivably too, as a ritual it perpetuates collective social interactions, bonds and friendships within localized communities and beyond.

Overall, sport seems to have a ritualistic connotation within most of the discussion groups. What is evidenced is that sport acts as a form of ritual (as mentioned above in relation to parochialism and tribalism) that preserves cultural transference of what is seen as uniquely and traditionally Irish and it maintains bonds at the parochial and communal level.

5.7 The community that unifies or a community of distinction

Within the Belfast focus group discussion, when 'Irish' identity is stripped back from its more generalized associations such as language, music, family, religion, etc., community is seen as a foundational characteristic. What also becomes evident within this focus group discussion is the particular condition of the Northern Irish context, mainly made relevant to the period prior to the peace agreements.[64] One participant describes how there was a community divide.

[64] According to the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA, 2016), 'the Good Friday Agreement is the cornerstone of our commitment to peace and stability on this island. It was agreed on 10 April 1998 and overwhelmingly approved in two referendums in both parts of Ireland in May 1998.'

Reagan [There was a] massive divide within rural community where you couldn't go, it's changed now for my children, my children are old teens so they have a different perception of community, they're very em (pause), there wouldn't be a racist bone in their body, they wouldn't be sectarian, they don't even understand the history sometimes, where the people distrust… each other so much because of differences

It would seem that the historical legacy of the recent conflict in Northern Ireland has imbued the term 'community' with overly negative connotations; yet also as a concept, it seems copper-fastened to identity formation. As is revealed below, the conflicting use of the term 'community', not only within the Belfast focus group discussion but by several other participants, seems to highlight how it reifies difference rather than transcending perceived and constructed notions of difference.

The notion of a singular collective community is more frequently used when statements emphasising positive collective action are linked to collective functioning. Positive collective action relates both to the sense of benefits and also to reciprocal responsibilities such as support, civic participation, and community group action, etcetera. Positive collective action is thus also linked to the more generalized use of community or "the community".

For instance within the Belfast focus group discussion, for the "community to function", Tony concurs with what is self-perceived as the necessity and importance of a common good by most of the interviewees. From the general conversation there is an onus of responsibility, not just for an individual's self-development but also for the community. In answer to how someone can become 'Irish', along with living, working and having family in Ireland, Molly states, "contributing to the community". Similarly, within the Drumcondra focus group discussion, community is defined in a homogenising way within Ireland broadly and is related to ideas of assimilation into the Irish collective.

In a post-viewing response, Ryan makes several observations regarding the comments made by the first interviewee Laura and the fourth interviewee Kevin. Ryan presents outlooks additional to what had been said prior to viewing the presentation:

Ryan The first person was talking about, you know, being, if you want to call it new Irish, or you know identity… and, you know, about relaxing your fears, em, the challenging problems, identifying them and or… spotting them, and the last person spoke about participating in community, engaging and contributing to the collective… I mean they're all, they're all solid to me, reasons or ways of being part of a community is participating in that community, in that collective, I don't even think all Irish people do that so, it is interesting to hear somebody who considers themselves to be new Irish maybe, to, to say that, maybe they've, there's more of a need to do that, to be accepted… one last thing about identity… I think generally, there's more of a need, like you need, if you want to be accepted as part of it… like, being Irish, like you may need to participate more or engage in the true collective, you know… in a more obvious way, in order to be noticed… as to say, "oh ok, you're Irish, you're ok, we'll keep yea"

Ryan refers to the notion of the community and in particular, how certain individuals deemed as members of the collective, may not sufficiently contribute through participation, to the normative wellbeing of society. The concept of "new Irish" is introduced and described as having a greater onus to perform to the expectations of social organization and order. Ryan goes on to discuss the expectation to participate in what is deemed as "the true collective" and the act of "being Irish" (Ryan). This assimilationist view is reliant on the notion of the existence of a homogenous society, as well as a comprehensive understanding of what actually "being Irish" should or would entail.

Community is also used to manufacture and describe groups as distinct from one another. In contrast, despite the recognition that, "*Irishness* doesn't actually have a colour or a language…" and as Tony makes an additional comment following the viewing of the presentation by stating "…assimilation, as opposed to

integration…almost depends on the extent to which you have to give things up",[65] he continues to discuss and compare by using community as a means to distinguish between groups:

Tony …I mean, I grew up in London and em, the Black community, the West Indian community particularly, it was easy for them to integrate 'cos of all, the white community, because they were Christian, so to a degree, there was less for them to give up, and then they were still black and still suffered desperate racism but when em, the Muslim community started to arrive, in numbers in my area, typical Bangladesh, it was more difficult for them to integrate because [they] weren't Christian, they were black and they were Muslim, do you know what I mean, there's levels of kinds of integration

An informed understanding of racism, disparate groups and their religious affiliations within the community in London is revealed in this extract. In this instance, the use of community is of interest along with how it demonstrates understanding of a community divided which replicates descriptions of the Northern Irish context. Overall this seems to emphasize perceived differences between groups within society and how conflicting images of what is called community are fabricated by participants.

As Tony later surmises, "well yeah, one has responsibilities when they are active members of, em, in a state, to participate in the state I suppose, representation and active in the community". Tony later recognises the "multiplicity of Irish identities" and acknowledges that this may not be as recent a phenomenon as commonly thought.

Tony Well I mean, the Jewish community was always here of course, you know what I mean? em, but they, we've done them in as well -

Molly The Chinese and Indian communities -

[65] To some degree in this instance, community is interpreted as acting as a locality and social configuration which promotes a 'subsumption pathway' (Latham, 2010: 191) towards eventual assimilation of individuals or their progeny into its dominant normative values, attitudes and behaviours.

Tony By the war you know -

Molly They've been here fifty, sixty or seventy years, they're not perceived as Irish or their kids aren't perceived as Irish

YB So you mean -?"

Tony The Asian community in the North has been quite - Indians particularly - it's been depressing

Although evidently within both extracts above, Tony seems to express good intentions and the desire to challenge and overcome racism, Tony continues to describe people in disparate groups according to specific communities. This use of distinction within community is pronounced when considered along sectarian lines also. Community as a distinguisher enters the conversation during a description of divergence whereby it is explained that with the Northern Irish conflict, certain groups supposedly believed they could no longer identify with being 'Irish'.

Molly …protestants, unionists, loyalists community no longer felt they could be Irish because of the Irish Republican Army or the… so I think the conflict has damaged… over that period of forty years -

Tony Irish Unionists from the nineteen-twenties was, and that tradition survived up until the start of the troubles, they don't exist anymore, they're British Unionists now… their Irish identity has nearly been expunged… from large bits of the loyalist, unionist community do not consider themselves to have any Irishness at all

Evidenced in this extract of conversation is the description of a disassociation with 'Irish' identity by loyalists and unionists but importantly perhaps also the emergence of a description of people with such affiliations fitting into discrete communities that, as previously described, are separate from the notion of one collective and homogenous community. This, along with the notion of discrete and segregated communities in relation to what may be deemed as minority groups, suggests that particular identity formations can place an individual within or external to what is

perceived as “the community” which is majority and dominant rather than “a community”. “The community” represents one overarching community of contesting groups, similar to the interpretation of culture prescribed by Finlay (2007: 342), while “a community” either represents a community of communities, complementing the essence of multiculturalism, or a singular community within the broader social environment. Consequently, the notion of “the community” seems to act as an identifying term or apparatus of segregation rather than “a community” which appears to operate more as a harmonizing mechanism within discourse to alleviate somewhat falsely constructed notions of difference.

Nonetheless community and segregation also manifest themselves beyond such discursive practice mentioned above. In the Drumcondra focus group discussion, Carroll describes the greater need of membership of community when living abroad in answer to what it means to be ‘Irish’. This instance supports the apparent notion of association with community and inclusion/exclusion, as is described by Carroll:

> **Carroll** I only ever felt really Irish when I went away, when I lived and worked away in America or England because I never thought about it before that, never, ever, I remember when I was a teenager – in my nineteen, twenties but, more of an issue for me was, when I was with different people, cos if I was in Ireland then everybody was the same, it didn’t matter what you were, but when I was in America or England, it was different, it felt different to be Irish cos it gave some kind of community, and some kind of basis, and some kind of people to be a part of you were like, I never thought about it before I went away, ever

Membership of the Irish community seems to insert one inside a closed and somewhat exclusive collective grouping. But what is also noteworthy is that the necessity for community association seems more definite when abroad, as a reaction to minoritization, whereas in Ireland the assumed default dominant majority positioning is within the Irish community, thus there is less impetus to self-associate with it. This aspect of being abroad, having a more pronounced sense of *Irishness*, pride and

yearning to be associated with the Irish community while abroad, as well as the sense of returning "home" having travelled, is evidenced in most of the focus group discussions and some interviews.[66]

Within the Limerick focus group discussion, community is juxtaposed with parochial sentiment and is perceived as a means of unifying members of society at a local level. Community is presented more positively than parochialism, which seems bound to the institution of the church. When society is described as "parochial" (as evidenced above) a counterargument is given to suggest that a more community based understanding of local society is a preferred perspective than thinking and referring to local Irish society as parish based. Keeping in mind that the Limerick focus group discussion was hosted at a local family resource centre should provide further clarity to the conversation below.

Maebh I do think we've good community spirit as well, and someone that lives -

Charlie Well I think the parish thing came from… what do you call them, did they start fights?…

Adrian But sure look it

Charlie …then the church honed in on the parish, and actually you know what we do every year? it's community based… families, it's very hard to take the parish out of people's mind…

Maebh Mind-set

Charlie They have this thing, well it's not really the parish itself… and I mean we cover work in nine or ten parishes… but it's very hard to instil in people that its community based…

Juliana What we're talking about, and we all understand that… this is called [town name] family resource centre and it's based here… but our catchment area is huge… so

[66] For example, Focus Group Discussions Limerick (Q4); Drumcondra (Q3); Naas (Q2); Drogheda (QA); Coolock (QG)

what Charlie is saying is that maybe people living in the outlying parishes don't actually recognise this as being their service

The implication from this conversation is that because of a more parochial mind-set that has been instilled in members of the local society, they are less likely to avail of the services being offered to a wider community at the family resource centre. This might be understood more generally to resemble how it can be challenging for the individual psyche to adjust at the same pace to societal changes in organization. Perhaps a lack of ability in adjustment is not only an unconscious process due to past memory and habitual practice, but also due to active resistance on the part of the individuals to concede to such societal alterations, due to allegiances, in this case most likely loyalty to Irish Catholicism. As Inglis (2010: 217) concludes in a study on Catholic identity in contemporary Ireland, although religious transformation is taking place through a process of de-institutionalisation, 'the majority of Irish Catholics still see and understand themselves as Catholics, have a strong sense of belonging and loyalty to a Catholic heritage, and accept most of the Church's key teachings and beliefs.'

The differentiation and separation between the church and community is also intentionally remarked upon later in the Limerick focus group discussion, when it slightly diverges away from a description of the difference between being 'Irish' and being an 'Irish' citizen.

Charlie …being charitable to me has nothing got to do with religion, you can be totally against a (religion) but still (be) very good -

Maebh … you're still a good Christian

Charlie Ah, in your community and to your fellow human being... you don't need to be religious

It is plausible that the reason the conversation deviates is because it is an issue of concern for some of the participants which they feel particularly strongly about and would like to vocalize and reiterate their opinion on the matter. Although there is the

rejection of the church and most likely the institutions of Catholicism, Christian values are still portrayed in a positive light in relation to community life.[67]

5.8 Chapter five conclusions

An analysis of conversations with the eight focus groups of this study would seem to indicate the perception that traits, which are deemed to characterise *Irishness*, are attained via one's immediate family, which provides the foundational basis for the cultural diffusion of values, attitudes and behaviours and which are reproduced inter-generationally. In addition, the constructed descriptions of participants would appear to portray immediate family and Irish family life in an idealized, romanticized and enduring fashion. These views, reliant on nostalgia, seem to conflict with significant societal changes that have occurred, specifically a growing independence of the marital unit with probably fewer kinship ties to distant relatives. On the one hand, motherhood and the reproduction of parental distinctiveness is perceived as based on desires to provide for the next generation, often at the cost of self-sacrifice, yet conversely, such perceived notions may in fact contribute towards replicating traditional patriarchal norms. This is because the commonly perceived roles of mother seem to persist as apprehended quite conservatively, with regard to the organization and maintenance of family life.

Ancestral lineage and the prominence of one's hereditary and wider family connections would seem to provide the underlying reasoning for claims of being 'Irish'. Participant responses appear to convey a conception of both immediate and wider family as being the means by which an individual's self-association with an Irish locality and being 'Irish' can be validated. From the analysis of conversations with participants the implication is that it is race, not space or locality, which primarily determines the basis of being 'Irish'.

The notion of clan is associated with conceptions of family, wider family and atomic genealogical ancestry. Being of a clan is seen as a more genuine form of authenticating *Irishness* and is construed as an unbroken lineage, first and foremost,

[67] Other interrelated topics that were discussed within the focus group discussions include, waning religion, spirituality, paganism and anti-puritan themes. Nonetheless due to constraints on limits and the primary focus of the thesis being on racial and ethnic considerations, these themes are not further expanded upon.

through *jus sanguinis* imaginaries that extend historically to the pre-medieval era. Some participants seem to interpret clan in biogenetic terms and thus the strength of the clan as being determined by reproduction, as well as the expansion of essentialized kinship though propagation of the progeny which enlarges the clan. Associated with clan are the relatable notions of grudge, begrudgery and belittlement which are perceived traits of *Irishness* that have persisted since feudalistic times. Although parochialism would seem to be mainly associated with rural Irish life, it can be seen to differ from clan as it is perceived as surpassing clan loyalty and focuses the community round the parish. Instead of relating parochialism to religion, specifically Christianity, parochial life as referred to by participants appears to be maintained through club sports, especially sports deemed as Irish, such as Gaelic football and hurling.

Participation and/or an interest in sport emerge as central constituents in the perceived fabrication of an Irish identity. Sport would seem to conjure in participants a preconceived sense of tribalism which creates polysemic links between concepts and groupings based on clan, parochialism and community. Although sport involvement should imply transactional interchange, the cultural sphere of sport, particularly Irish sport, seems perceived as within the creed of *Irishness*, Irish kinship and descent. Though rarely discussed amongst the younger participants, sport is contested as a determining attribute of an Irish identity. Sport is referred to generally, both in participation and spectatorship, as a signifier or means of facilitating more abstract notions related to being 'Irish', such as enthusiasm and pride. Interrelated with feelings on becoming 'Irish' more abstract facets re-materialize as preconditions for earning Irish status, which consist of desiring and wanting to be a "good" citizen. Furthermore, the spectacle of sport acts to provide seasons of rituals or practices which revolve around a shared familiarity and mood, as well as forming memorable experiences that become embedded with nostalgia. The habituated spectacle of sport as an attributive descriptor of *Irishness* would seem to create a degree of cultural *insiderism* or ethnocentrism that may overly rely on notions of fixed and persistent ethno-national distinctions.

Community also appears to be a foundational characteristic of Irishness, in particular, how community is apperceived with traditional and rural living. Participants drew synonymous comparisons between cultural production and evolution or 'progress'

which would seem relatable to the creation and reproduction of tradition, and its associated values, whereby tradition is constantly reinvented. For some participants, community is conceived of dualistically as either, an all-inclusive singular collective – *the* Irish community, or, to describe a distinct group within the collective – *a* community. Both interpret society as a prearranged naturally homogenous collectivity within which there are unnatural variances that either require assimilation or can never truly be conceived of as part of the collective. The perceived views of some participants within the discussions would seem to challenge the theory that late modernity is resulting in the decline of family, as a fragment of community, but rather views expressed still would seem to support notion that direct kinship networks are dominant within societal organisation irrespective of a decline in broader community ties.

As a means of introducing empirical results and findings pertaining to *Irishness,* chapter five commenced at the social unit of immediate family. As above and consistent with the development of the findings chapters overall, this chapter progresses by expanding outwardly from the more micro-social circumstance to more macro-level themes. Having introduced more micro-level perceived notions of Irish identity in relation to day-to-day relationships on being 'Irish', at the distance of home, clan, parochial and community life the next chapter widens the focus of the lens on perceived thoughts on historical *Irishness* and becoming 'Irish', as expressed by the participants of the study.

6 Historical *Irishness* and becoming 'Irish'

This chapter commences by presenting narratives on the historical, specific to notions of *Irishness*. Subsequent to this, Irish history as perceived by participants provides the basis for expressions of social change. Societal change is inferred directly to biological evolution. The chapter continues by uncovering how participants perceive 'the other' as lacking historical connection with the nation, across a spectrum of criteria. The following section points out an inconsistency and bias within several of the focus group discussions whereby participants dismissed, in this case American, claims to 'Irish' identity based on ancient hereditary links. Progressing from conversation about ancient Irish history, the subsequent section introduces modern Irish history from the perspective of participants. Separately, the subject and discipline of history is shown to have emerged in several focus group discussions.

The following section introduces aspects pertaining to being 'Irish', such as, recognising the Irish, claiming or calling oneself Irish and feeling Irish. Interrelated to this are 'insider' self-subscription and ascription onto a person who might be perceived as more of an 'outsider' or 'newcomer'. The prevalence of conversation in relation to the mere possession of an Irish passport across all of the focus group discussions and beyond is highlighted. From here, linking to the conversations presented in the previous section on perceived *Irishness* and history, participants' perceptions of being or becoming an 'Irish' citizen are compared with being 'Irish' and nationalistic sentiment. Leading on from this, findings show how the agency to self-define as Irish is linked to the less palpable sense of feeling Irish. In several of the focus group discussions, cultural exposure over time is shown to gain prominence. The concluding section presents conversation whereby some participants recognise the dilemma between conforming to societal cultural norms and expectations while having the privileged ability and right to be self-expressive, unconventional and even to contest such prevailing customs.

6.1 Historical orientations of *Irishness*

Although narratives on the historical were consistent across most of the focus group discussions, some discussions revealed alternative interpretations of the past. Discussions would often take the form of emphasizing positive attributes of being 'Irish' and also supporting claims relating to becoming 'Irish'. Within the Naas group discussion, numerous references to the historical presented not only the conventional but also in some respect a more revisionist view of Irish history specifically. Overall this fed into a more questioning and better informed approach by the participants of Naas focus group discussion, whereas in the other focus group discussions references to the historical were quite sporadic and often had the tendency to reaffirm notions relating to identity as fixed, based on one-dimensional notions of history.

The historicity of Ireland as a small island, with repeated flows of 'newcomers' and migrants, complicates an accurate understanding of what might be deemed as 'native'. Thus, it is exactly claims to historical pasts which likely contribute towards defining contemporary conceptions of *Irishness*. In describing characteristics of *Irishness*, within the Drogheda focus group discussion, one response seems to refer to tourism but also alludes to the ancestral roots Ireland represents to the wider world.

> **Machie** …the way Ireland is perceived outside of, eh, Ireland is more of a touristy kind of perception and that's why most of the people from Germany and Spain and places like that visit Ireland, to see the more ancestral places, so I'd say touristy as well would be, it's a very nice place of Irish, ancient kind of stuff like castles and things like that

In the Belfast focus group discussion, Tony considers "…history is very important…" when describing a distinctive Irish ethnicity. What is interesting is that when other dimensions, such as culture, language and religion are omitted, according to Tony history appears to be reduced down to providing, "the sense that we've been here longer than anyone else, anyone else who comes in, does so on our terms, on the terms of, you know, native Irish people, you know, that phrase you see on every history book, you know, 'who are the native Irish?'" Such a critical stance on the

notion of ‘nativeness’ is also documented by O’Brien (1971), who relates nativist claims to regressive nationalistic sentiment.

However, when this dimension of longevity of time is examined further, no specific point is established that gives closure on the ‘true’ authenticity of an individual’s claim to *Irishness*. There is the suggestion of a greater genuineness by connecting to an ancient heritage but what is questionable is less related to the historical reality of an ancient past and more the supposed actuality of a current person’s genealogical link to such a past, in order to deem oneself a true ‘native’. This ambiguity could be seen alternatively in what is described as an aspiration of Douglas Hyde, ‘to restore the broken continuity of the Irish nation with an ancient past by arguing that the essential reality of *Irishness* is based on Gaelic history, and by proclaiming a knowledge of Gaelic culture and traditions the birthright of all Irish people’ (Tovey *et al.*, 1989: 18).

In contrast, within the Naas focus group discussion, in describing the difference between being ‘Irish’ and being an ‘Irish’ citizen, participants apparently make the argument for a more inclusive understanding of *Irishness* and challenge the constitutional changes made in the 2004 ICR.

Liam Nowadays there’s no, like there, I doubt there is any Irish person here who has just been completely Irish through the years, there has been… mixing, there has been different cultures coming together… so I, I don’t think you can actually reject someone from becoming a citizen of their country it’s, it’s unfair to be honest

Colin It’s funny to say nowadays but I mean it’s not just nowadays, it’s been happening for a long time, what with all… the Vikings and there was the people who came… from Spain originally, and then there was the Celts and then the Vikings and the English, so there

Liam There is no one that… is pure Irish

Colin Yeah, well… there just is none, there’s no ethnicity that is purely Irish, it just doesn’t exist (pause)

The students seem to question the idealized and notional concept of a pure 'Irish' identity. Primarily this is achieved by stressing more accurately the historicity of Ireland and connecting such an understanding to conceptions of identity. To a degree, the views imply a level of 'frailty of concepts such as identity, nationality and history in the light of the problematic and flexible notion of perspective' as described by Monohan (2009: 216). Though in this case, evidence demonstrates how the participants 'produce a critique of the essentialist and mythopoeic [myth making] aspects of Irish identity' (Monohan, 2009: 217) rather than rely on established 'protreptic (classical rhetoric) discourse'. The conversation above highlights the ambivalence and tenuousness of claims of a fixed nature that genealogically link an Irish individual with the more ancient bygone eras. What is surprising is that such a dislocating viewpoint is only voiced in this context in the Naas focus group discussion.

In contrast, genealogical links to the historical are discussed by Kelsey in relation to modern history in a more idealized way in a separate discussion. In relation to the conversation on family names (as detailed in chapter five), though in the post-viewing stage of the same discussion, participant Dana suggests that having Irish descent is an essential criterion for being 'Irish' but that, "it doesn't have to go back like thousands of years" but rather, "one or two generations will do". Kelsey appears to make the connection between genealogy and history and interjects by focusing on the connection to a more recent history and provides a justification for claiming *Irishness* based on ancestral links that extend only several generations or back as far as the new formation of the Irish nation state.

Kelsey …I think it's great like, having that national… sense of like history, I mean like, 'cos Ireland is such a small country… I think all of us can go back and do our ancestry and we can all find someone who died in nineteen sixteen rising related to us or one of us, all of us have some sort of uncle that like wrote the proclamation, I mean like I'm related to like John Redmond and Michael Collins, like all of us are gonna be related to one of them… and it is, it is that kind of sense to say, 'well my ancestors fought for this', and it

	is such a small country, our ancestors generally did, and it is -
Brady	but if you're looking back thousands of years ago you'll find that a lot of people aren't Irish… because we were invaded by so many different cultures, it's just like… half of us are, would be, north Europe, northern European Normans, the Scandinavians
Christine	the Spanish armada
Brady	the Spanish armada, the British…
Dana	I think it only has to go back like… a couple of generations…

The conversation evolves by drawing on a broad understanding of Irish migration, settlement and invasion historically to emphasize the melange of cultures and traditions that have mixed to produce what are within present day considered to be 'Irish'. The participants continue by implying that processes of integration and assimilation have occurred but that, "there is still old Gaelic (slight pause) culture there" (Brady). Overall, observable in both conversations are references to the historical that undermine justifications for claiming *Irishness*, or a purity of 'Irish' identity, based on genealogy or familial lineage. This extract, along with the extracts immediately above and below, concur with the historical description of Irish migration and settlement as offered by White (2008). They would seem to challenge the notion of a pure Irish homogeneity on the historical grounds that since ancient times 'waves of immigrants from various geographical locations settled and contributed to the genetic variability of the Irish' (White, 2008: 83).

6.2 Referencing history in relation to societal change

Within the Drumcondra focus group discussion, the conception of *Irishness* being obtained through a level of inherentness is intertwined with a general emphasis on understanding social progress as being an almost intrinsic evolutionary process. Participants' perceptions seem to complement notions of 'social evolutionism' which view history as a having directionality and 'reflecting certain unifying principles of

organisation and transformation' (Giddens, 1990: 5*f.*).[68] Recognition of the historical melange of Irish society is described to frame how identity in the twenty-first Century might be re-imagined. The conversation below follows on from participants expressing the view that diversity is generally positive and enriching for the host society (as detailed later in this chapter).

Eddie We're not the same, we're not the same people that the Fir Bolg's and Tuatha de Danann's were

Ryan Anyway, you know, you're not going to…

Eddie Every time, every time a new group arrived, everything changed… whether it was the Vikings or the Normans… or the British -

Ryan This is a new Irish

Eddie Of the Scottish plantation, you know, of Ulster or whatever… all, I mean we're constantly changing all the time and these people all brought different influences… they changed our language… they changed our culture, they changed our habits, they changed our dress, they changed what we ate and what we drank

Ryan The crucial difference is, you know, the suddenness, you know in Ireland… you know within the, fifteen, twenty year period… so, I think, there's a huge influx of -

Carroll Yeah, the numbers and -

Ryan Different cultures and, yeah… I mean if it happened over a fifty year period maybe it's, it's a different thing, but it's happening a sudden way…

Eddie And you know everybody is terrified of change, we don't like change

[68] Giddens (1990) would contest such an assumption of progress as inherent to the history of humankind.

Ryan	No, nobody does…
Eddie	You know what we have to realise is that… what we are afraid is going to change, was in fact change itself, you know different to what went before it… so it's constantly, it just, we just need to get, get a grip on ourselves really and realise that it's going to change anyway
Alana	That change is good ultimately
Eddie	Of course it is yeah (pause)
Carroll	I keep telling myself that

As detailed above, there appears to be recognition of the innateness of societal change through the process of looking back to the past. The interposing supposition by Ryan that the change that Ireland has experienced is somehow extraordinary, thus alarming, seems exaggerated. The participant does, however, imply recognition of the inevitable condition of liquid modernity and the ambivalence of identity together with a sense of anxiety and fear, which is comparable to depictions by Bauman (2001; 2006).

Nevertheless, the dimension of fear that accompanies change seems to be portrayed quite uniformly at a collective level but operates at the level of the individual. By claiming a fear of change amongst all, there is the sense that the participant/s perspective is confirming the desire to maintain the status quo and that with change, the position of the status quo might be vulnerable to change. This aspect of fear is confronted by Eddie with the suggestion that one must know it as an inevitability, but an inescapable effect likely to produce positive societal outcomes. However, in contract to this, the exaggerated portrayal as well as claims of fear by Ryan appears to provide for an elusive sense of greater concern to conserve the status quo by resisting or being pessimistic about change.

This aspect of recognition of historical change and fear relates to the understanding of the inevitability of change within a contemporary Irish setting expressed in several focus group discussions (as detailed below).

Lack of lineage closely ties in with what has been previously discussed in relation to perceived 'native' and seemingly less native claims to *Irishness*, as well as the topics

of family, clan and feudalism covered in chapter five. This lack of lineage understood as a lack of historical connection impedes the capacity to become 'Irish'. In the Drumcondra focus group discussion, these issues seem to have been compounded when answering the post-viewing question, which asks about the difference between being 'Irish' and being an 'Irish' citizen:

Ryan I think being Irish maybe suggests you have maybe a lineage way, there could be time… so you'd have lines of say family, family before that in various different, it can be different parts of Ireland… but in Ireland and links probably to the land itself, there's a real link I think to the land and the landscape and nature and sport and the politics, so you have that lineage going back maybe some generations… a new citizen wouldn't just by definition, probably just arrived in the country over a couple of years, five years, or maybe quite recently born here

Alana She wouldn't have the history…

This excerpt draws a connection between genealogy or family lineage, association with the physical terrain, culture and politics, longevity of stay and place of birth as mechanisms that validate claiming to be 'Irish', which is surmised by Alana as possessing "the history", whereas a person wishing to become 'Irish', or an 'Irish' citizen, may not necessarily encapsulate all of these features into their history as an Irish person. In connection to this, as Liu and Hilton (2005: 537) describe, 'history provides us with narratives that tell us who we are, where we came from and where we should be going. It defines a trajectory which helps construct the essence of a group's, how it relates to other groups.' The implication from above is that without knowing the representations of Irish history and having a conclusive connection to them, one cannot really be 'Irish'.

When it is later suggested that these seemingly subtle differences between being 'Irish' and being an 'Irish' citizen might create social stratifications, the conversation continues as follows:

Alana I don't think so but I think it's a reality… it's a reality that eh, we have a history being, we'll say the old Irish, whereas the new Irish have other cultures (pause) and -

Ciara I don't think it's divisive, it's necessarily a divisive thing

Alana No, I don't see it… but they would have their traditions… and culture

This response, although somewhat rejecting that social stratification might occur, also implies a process of differentiation because of diverse historical pasts, traditions and cultures. The suggestion here is that the "old Irish" are represented by a somewhat homogenized sameness historically, whereas the "new Irish" have a melange of alternative histories. Such a benign understanding neglects to comprehend that for the reconstitution of identities, ethnic or otherwise, power relations are of immense significance (Tovey *et al.*, 1989: 7)

6.3 Contradictions within 'nativist' claims to *Irishness*

At this juncture a revealing attitude is exposed relating to sentiments towards American Irish, in particular how American Irish lay claims to *Irishess*. It would be expected that arguments espousing nativist claims to *Irishness* that are based on ancient historical links to Ireland would then support claims made by Americans or other members of a supposed Irish diaspora to be or become 'Irish'. However, this would seem not to be the case. In truth, the responses within several of the focus group discussions appear to expose quite negative sentiments to those making such claims.

Juliana But, you know, so this, this view, looking at Ireland through rose tinted glasses is something that is common, if you talk to Americans especially, I just thought of history, recent history, talking to people from America and engage with them on Facebook, people through family relations, and… they own more than an Irish man… they just want to be Irish, they're not Irish,

now if you go back in their history you might find that… generation, or even some, don't have any Irish in their blood whatsoever, yet they want this whole Irish thing going on for them… so there's, there's this vision of the Emerald Isle, the old country

Charlie It will always…

Juliana And that's the land… yes, it's rose tinted glasses

In this instance what becomes apparent is not only a rejection of Americans claiming *Irishness*, but also a critique of an overly optimistic and idealized view of Ireland. There is the conflicting issue of American individuals attempting to lay claim to *Irishness* due to their genealogy while also the suggestion that with this are claims to the land or territory. Further to this, Americans are criticized for attempting to make even greater claims to *Irishness* than the Irish themselves.

Similarly within the Drumcondra focus group discussion below, this issue is discussed in relation to whether, or not, having 'Irish' parentage is an essential criterion for being 'Irish'.

Alana Well, when you look at America and there, its three generations back that were Irish and they still consider themselves Irish, today like you know

YB Umhmm, and are they?

Alana Eh, well they think they are, like your man from, born in Cairo (referring to the interviewee, Kevin), in America he was Irish but in Ireland he was - (laughter)…

Eddie I think that… the American situation is different because America is a very young country and they don't have a kind of history… unless you go back to the native Americans, so it's relatively young, you know, they have a building that is a hundred years old, they're saying, "woe, look at this, fantastic", "ah yeah, but we have buildings five thousand years old", you know, I

> think they're very conscious of the fact that they are very young, they don't have a history… and they don't have the roots and the culture, so, I think they kind of frantically look for something to hang on to… and something to identify with and give them… I think that is why it is important to them

This extract led by contributions from Eddie, places emphasis on the historical, or perceived lack of an historical past, in relation to a sense of the decentred self that requires and yearns for "something to identify with". The impression is that, without possessing an adequate past the self, in this context the American, is seen as incomplete.

What may also be implied from the snippet from the Drumcondra discussion above is how identifying with *Irishness* and claiming to be Irish may be based on a conscious recognition of a connection to not only a recent past but to an ancient history. In this instance what becomes apparent, independent of considerations of historicity, are the assumptions that a person might make to believe they have a genealogical lineage that would trace back into ancient Irish history. Such a concept of lineage is based on essentialist notions of culture as being based on 'primordial inheritance of a people or group' (Finlay, 2007: 337). In effect, the individual appropriates the cultural-historical to justify and elevate their sense of being 'Irish' and conversely seems to challenge another's claim by either a lack of connection to such an historical expanse, or by undermining another's desire to become 'Irish' in the absence of such a claim. Relating back to the extract which suggested a degree of conservatism (see above), such appropriation, albeit baseless for the majority, may relieve insecurities and may be conducted less to stabilize the sense of self by connecting to an ancient historical past, but more as a mechanism to maintain and preserve a conservative social arrangement that benefits the self. An outcome of mitigating such insecurities is the rejection of 'others' who lack their own claim to an ancient past or cannot lay claim specifically to such Irish historicity. An alternative position would complement the views (as described earlier above) which suggest an Irish person's genealogical link to an ancient Irish past is quite tenuous.

The emphasis on attachment to an ancient Irish historical past over a perceived lack of connection to the historical past seems also present within the Coolock focus group discussion, when a link is made between knowing the self, "where you are, where are you from?" (Conlaoch), and understanding the traces of one's shared history.

Peadar	I mean is that the reason why we tend, Irish people tend to hark back to the past in many occasions, if you go to a new country, like the United States, I mean their history is what? Three or four hundred years you can say, you know, and we're talking about thousands
Conlaoch	Well their history is thousands as well, it's just they've been forgot -
Tierney	Is just they wipe away -
Peadar	No, no, no I'm talking about the white civilization
Conlaoch	Yes the white civilization…
Peadar	No, no, no but I'm talking about… the Westernization

Of significance in this excerpt is the recognition of an erasure of history, let alone a false or skewed understanding of the past. This presents an alternative mechanism by which the self rejects a more ancient past, as a form of collectivized amnesia.[69] Within the context of the Irish, nevertheless, claiming *Irishness* through the connection to a more ancient past could be seen as not only a means of benefiting the self over 'others' who wish to enter within, but may be a means of elevating the perceived status of the 'insider' individual in comparison with 'others' beyond the Irish collective who may not even desire to become part of a shared *Irishness*.

6.4 The post-colonial yet juvenile nation state

In the Limerick focus group, discussion about Ireland seems to distinguish between its pre- nation state condition, as a colonized land and its post- nation state reality, as a young and developing republic, to provide a justification for its shortcomings at a

[69] It may be in the American context the supremacy of grounding one's self-identification in a more recent historical epoch relates to notions of the hegemony of 'white civilization' and 'Westernisation', vis-à-vis, American exceptionalism.

collective level. Apparently, what is also seen as a new characteristic of the Irish is the desire for materialistic wealth. As Maebh claims, "I suppose em, we got more materialistic really". When this aspect was probed into further the historical justification was provided.

Dale You see we're a very young country and I think we forget that, this country is really, not even a hundred years old… so we don't have necessarily great traditions of our own making, they were always influenced by, and our history is influenced by other nations, so this, Ireland as we know today only became a country really in the forties, if you want to get down to it, when it became a republic, and eh, it only actually completely happened when Ireland had total independence from any other nation, so I think really, we are just like the child in the sweet shop, going out to explore, you know we give out to teenagers these days, taking things further than their own generations, those of us who are older, I think the Irish nation is like that, we're all exploring, exploring, exploring, pushing boundaries and breaking a few of them, I think at this stage everyone would agree with that

The analogy provided in this instance suggests quite a naïve understanding of the collective activities of the Irish. Drawing parallels with "the child in the sweet shop" implies the emergence of a more consumerist mind-set amongst the Irish, similar to the description by Ingis (2008: 38) of contemporary Ireland where 'globalization has dramatically increased the consumer and lifestyle choices through which Irish people develop new identities and realize themselves as individuals.'

Moreover, a denial of responsibility and accountability seems to occur both pre and post-colonial rule, as perceived by Dale. The impression is that the colonial past of Ireland is generally portrayed in a negative light due to external forces associated with British colonialism, whereas the more recent historical referencing negates responsibility by ascribing blame to the juvenility of the nation state collective.

Likewise, from the outset within the Drumcondra focus group discussion, Ryan appears to provide a somewhat similar perspective when describing characteristics of *Irishness*.

Ryan … I think we are a complicated race, because of history, you know, because of colonization and then, well the freedom, you know, we're joined with the EU in training, training again different, it's getting more internationalized, people travel more and so on, that has changed people's perception of what the country is, (slight pause) eat different foods, so I think it's been sort of, big changes in the past forty fifty years… we're still somewhat a complicated people, probably because we got full confidence in ourselves, although this recent economic crash there's been maybe, (pause) given some pointers as to that insecurity again, worry, you need a Troika of economies coming together to bail us out of the problem, now we're, kind of, cowing to another group, it's not the colonizer it's someone else… it's an IMF,[70] it's a European sort of grouping that we have to sort of bow down to, like we've been bold… you know as a nation… maybe immature in some ways, I think, there's a lot of confidence has grown in the country, but there's still a large degree, I think at some level, or levels, there are still some insecurities that seep in, overall, I think very gregarious to a point but, not wild as is popularly known, quite timid and conservative, we put up with a lot, without protest…

The conversation again suggests indirectly a deferring of responsibility away from the collective Irish towards either the past colonizer, or newer institutions of power such as the European Union (EU) or International Monetary Fund (IMF). The recent historical timespan, when Ireland is seen as possessing greatest sovereignty and independence, is similarly seen as a time of immaturity and naivety for the nation

[70] IMF is an abbreviation of the International Monetary Fund

state. What is also revealed and noteworthy from this excerpt in the closing comment is how it may also provide insight into the psyche of the Irish generally in its response to 'others' who may wish to become part of the Irish collective. It would seem to suggest a sense of underlying insecurity that feeds into conservatism amongst the Irish.

6.5 Learning history to gain cultural awareness

All the informed references to the historical, provided by participants, comes across as being related to their learnt understanding of the past. Within the Drogheda focus group when discussing what it means to be 'Irish', the participants initially refer to the pragmatics, then the less tangible, such as feeling Irish but also having roots with society. In contrast to Toben's anecdotal account of a person who lives in Ireland but maintains a greater affiliation with his country of Nigeria, Irena attempts to disregard or at least downplay the obstacles facing the racialized 'Other' by detailing the process of becoming 'Irish' irrespective of ethnic or racial associations.

> **Irena** …you have an Irish passport now… that you think that you would like to stay here, you would like to connect with this eh, society, eh, for you, you think about, "I should know Irish history… because I will be, learn my children or others… this history, because I live here… I would like to stay here"… for me I must be proud from this country because, I eh, I must also think I am responsible, eh, responsible… responsible for this country, for this eh, connect, integration you know… because I am here, now I am Irish, I decide to have Irish… citizen, yes…

What is evident in this extract is a clear link between satisfying the legal criteria and the granting of access to citizenship, along with a heightened sense of obligation of responsibility towards the Irish collective and the ability to self-subscribe as Irish, or at least an 'Irish' citizen. An understanding of history specific to Ireland and the transference of historical knowledge would seem to be compulsory. Knowledge of history is acquired within notions of nationalistic pride and cultural transference.

However, there is the sense that compounding these two may restrict a more critical appraisal of such knowledge re/production and overly focus on positivist accounts of history.

In the case of what was revealed from the Naas focus group discussion, evidently the participants view their learnt history as both a mechanism of inciting pride in their past but also as a means of critical engagement. For instance during a conversation where participants were describing their sense of pride and love in being 'Irish', Colin refers to their "big interest in Irish history". Subsequently, in reference to the rebellion and beyond Colin states, "I don't know, I think again going back to history, they never gave up, for the most part, there was always somebody trying… [whereas] there are lots of countries that have and do give up freedom". However, in keeping with the overall tone of the conversation, the same participant in a separate account later claims quite reflexively, "everybody likes to lie about their history…" Their knowledge and critical engagement with History as a discipline would seem to indicate that their learning goes beyond what Gilroy (1990: 114*f.*) describes as a dated role of history pedagogy whereby it is understood as the transmission, reproduction and celebration of an 'authentic' national identity and culture that supposedly unifies a population through homogenization but excludes through 'a kind of disqualification from membership of the national community…' (Gilroy, 1990: 115).

6.6 Chapter six conclusions

Chapter six commences by highlighting how the historical is afforded importance by people who customarily self-subscribe as Irish, whereby association is related to genealogical links or ancestral roots to an Irish past. However, this is challenged primarily by younger participants with respect to the perceived basis and accuracy of Irish historicity. Nonetheless, comprehending societal change seems to be dependent on references to a perceived historical past. Consequently, social transformation is expressed and conceived of as a form of progress that appears to be conceptualized akin to natural evolutionary processes. In relation to the assumption of societal change as an innate progression comparable to evolution, some reservation is expressed concerning the perceived rapidity of change in the fabric of Irish society due to migration. Compared to past migration it is seen as either a supposedly negative

phenomenon, or, as an inexorable evolutionary process with the potential to create positive social progress. Inferred from this, views would seem to assume that diachronic connections or temporal progress is integrally linked to civilizing processes.

Participants create an important distinction by claiming how 'the other' lacks historical connection with the Irish nation across a continuum of indicators, distinction is created by participants. Such a deficit would seem to be perceived as lessening a person's claims of *Irishness*. Therefore, representations of history are not only used as a means to create, maintain and shape an individual's self-identity, but are combined to influence their social status in relation to others. Across several of the focus group discussions a particular bias is identified where participants divulge negative attitudes towards American claims to *Irishness* based on ancient hereditary links to Ireland. When compared with findings presented in the previous chapter, this would seem inconsistent with the justified rationale utilized to lay claim to *Irishness* for one-self, namely that connection to an ancient past is an integral part of perceived Irish identity.

The perceived views by participants, of more modern Irish history by participants, in addition to views of pre- and post-colonial Ireland would appear to act as a mechanism to disclaim accountability for what are acknowledged as past and persistent collective issues shared within Irish society. Furthermore, this is also achieved through the portrayal of Ireland as a juvenile nation that has yet to become equipped with the means to unburden itself from the persistent societal problems it still endures. Interrelated with this, one participant reveals the sense of underlying insecurity, particularly with regard to Ireland's perceived lack of response to increased migration and integration, which is recognised as feeding into conservatism amongst the Irish.

Somewhat disparate from the previous themes mentioned above, within several focus group discussions the importance of history as a topic of knowledge attained pedagogically is highlighted as a means of better understanding oneself individually and within a collective. Participants' views seem to emphasize the value and importance of acquiring comprehensive knowledge of Irish history so as to become completely assimilated into the Irish collective and self-subscribe as Irish.

Having broadened the scope of analysis from more localized day-to-day conceptions of *Irishness* in chapter five, the above results and findings in chapter six interlink and detail perceived views of the context of Irish history specific to *Irishness*. Views on history are interrelated with conceptions of family, clan, and so forth vis-à-vis notions of descent, genealogical lineage and 'nativist' or essentialist claims to *Irishness*. Although alternative contestations in relation to Irish historicity are presented, in addition to more diffuse themes such as the perceived juvenility of the Irish nation state and learning history as a means to gaining cultural awareness, chapter six maintains a broad focus on the perceived foundational arguments for being 'Irish'. Leading on from these more bedrock layers, chapter seven details the more existent and habitual means by which being 'Irish' is ascribed.

7 Recognising being ‘Irish’

This chapter details the process of recognising the Irish as discussed by participants. It differentiates between the ability to call oneself Irish or self-subscribe as Irish in comparison to ascribing *Irishness* onto a subject as an ‘insider’. Both are seen as affording the ‘insider’ or ‘native’ a position of privilege that conversely disempowers by externalising an alternative subject as ‘outsider’ or ‘part-outsider’ and as the “newcomer”.

One mechanism that is alluded to in achieving this emerges in the conversation: there is evidence of a nuanced contrast between being ‘Irish’ and being or becoming an Irish citizen. A subtle classificatory distinction is evidenced to imply an imbalanced power dynamic between both within social interaction. Yet, for all intents and purposes, legally they are both analogous, with both sharing equal claim to the benefits of the state such as the provision of an Irish passport.

Although not referenced by participants there is an arbitrariness to being ‘Irish’ which for many affords them security as members of the nation and the freedom to travel, there is less arbitrariness to being an Irish citizen of the state. This leads to the requirement of the state to recognize morality. As Appiah (1997: 623) deconstructs, ‘since human beings live in political orders narrower than the species, and since it is within those orders that questions of public right and wrong are largely argued out and decided, the fact of being a fellow citizen – someone who is a member of the same order – is not morally arbitrary at all.’

7.1 The segregation of being 'Irish' and being an Irish citizen

As evidenced across all of the interviews, Preliminary Phase and Main Stage focus group discussions, the pragmatic aspect of simply possessing a passport is stressed as tangible evidence in support of claims to being or becoming an 'Irish' citizen. In the Drumcondra focus group discussion, upon viewing the multimedia presentation, the initial comments that were made focused on the importance of possessing an Irish passport. As Eddie observes from the responses of the interviewees, "well I suppose, they all appreciate, eh, their Irish passport would you say?… yeah, they showed an appreciation for it, that maybe Irish people themselves don't realize". Within the Belfast focus group discussion, in answer to a question posed by the facilitator, "…how would you define what it means to be Irish, for you currently?" Molly simply responds, "an Irish passport (laughter)". Although speculative, what may be inferred here is a somewhat satirical recognition of what *Irishness* has lost and that its meaning has been reduced down to the very simple and pragmatic aspect of possessing an Irish passport. On the one hand, such an object has become so valued because of the historical context of Ireland's international relations, yet, also valued somewhat cynically for the ease and privilege it affords an Irish person to travel relatively freely.

Although the possession of a passport and other such legally afforded rights are recognised, a subtle distinction between being an 'Irish' citizen and being 'Irish' seems to surface in most conversations. Within the Coolock focus group discussion, during conversation in response to what it means to be 'Irish' Peadar seeks clarification as to whether both being 'Irish' and being an 'Irish' citizen are analogous by posing the question to the other participants.

Peadar Can I just come back and qualify… somebody who is an Irish citizen (slight pause)… they're Irish, correct?

Tierney No, no

Keela I think so, I think so

Peadar …well, so if you stood in the concert hall… last week… full of six hundred people, who are not white… but they're Irish

Aileen Exactly

Tierney Yeah, yeah but… yeah but they're not Irish, they weren't born here

Peadar My argument is, that's my point, now are we qualifying it? ... no, no, no, I've, no, no, I'm saying…we're talking about ourselves, I'm talking about an Irish citizen… are they Irish?

Tierney About ourselves

Peadar I think they are

Aileen Yeah I think definitely

The response as evidenced in this excerpt is varied, with both Peadar and Aileen being quite adamant that being 'Irish' and being an 'Irish' citizen are synonymous whereas Tierney rejects such. Tierney's rejection is based on the rationale that if "we're talking about ourselves" and ascribing it to ourselves then both being 'Irish' and being an 'Irish' citizen would be identical. Nevertheless, in the circumstance where one might gain citizenship and go through a formal award ceremony, such as those hosted by state representatives (referenced above), it might be inferred from the above extract that Tierney would not equate being 'Irish' as synonymous with being an 'Irish' citizen.

Also in the Drumcondra focus group discussion the recognition of classificatory distinction between being 'Irish' and being an 'Irish' citizen also seems to be emphasized.

Carroll I think there's a subtle kind of classification there in the choice of words, I think if someone said to you, 'I'm Irish'…

Eddie There would be a certain understanding as Ryan has said… if someone says' 'I'm an Irish citizen' it suggests there's only a short timeline here and I may have a passport or a piece of paper but you know, I need that to establish me as being Irish… that there are reasons perhaps, why I wouldn't be, necessarily be Irish, it kind of suggests that you have… have kind of earned it or

> been given it… as it were, rather than automatically entitled or classified as Irish, doesn't it? I think… and certainly, I don't think we would, I don't think we would call ourselves an Irish citizen, I think we would say we're Irish

In this extract there appears to be a clear understanding of the differences between either referring to, or, being referred to as an 'Irish' citizen or as simply being Irish. Eddie implies also an imbalanced power dynamic between both contexts by suggesting that being 'Irish' is a privilege afforded unconditionally to those within, whereas to become an 'Irish' citizen there is the conditionality of earning that entitlement.

Furthermore, in deconstructing the two terms, "I'm Irish" and "I'm an Irish citizen" it could be posited that within the first singular statement there is the subtle understanding of being part of the Irish in its plural form. Thus it suggests being a member of the collective Irish. Whereas the latter personal claim of fact individualizes the subject within their own statement. It thus renders the subject, albeit making a claim that may be factually true, detached from the many. Such a process of classification may be seen not only as binding specific dissimilar associations, but by segregating the discrete subject it disempowers them at a subliminal level by reducing their capacity to be conceived as part of the collective. This reflects the views of Foucault (1977) and Said (1978 and 1994) who place emphasize on discursive practices through which exclusions are subtly and not so subtly created.

Diarmuid recognises that what it means to be 'Irish' has likely changed since the 1950s. As Diarmuid states in relation to the demographic makeup of contemporary Irish society, "about ten percent are other nationalities, and 'others' who have come in, migrants… so we are changing as a society, look and very, very eh, significantly". Continuing to elaborate on this, Diarmuid claims to be nationalistic, a republican and proud to speak Irish and within this context claims, "I'm proud to be Irish (pause), but now I, I welcome other people who are now Irish citizens and we are now a more diverse society, and we have to allow for that". This clearly stresses a perceived predicament Diarmuid faced and somewhat still is trying to reconcile, within the self-realization of the inevitability of societal change. There is the sense that expressing an

affiliation with Irish national republicanism ordinarily should be understood as though it is at odds with notions of an inclusive and diverse society. Yet there seems to be the realization on the part of Diarmuid that it may in actuality not be the case. Such a position, as expressed by Diarmuid would seem to correspond with Fossum's (2012) view that democratic constitutional states can be explicitly committed to inclusive community.[71] The extent to which Diarmuid is willing to change and afford the ascription of *Irishness* to 'the other' is limited however, with the labelling of "Irish citizens" and the subtle inclusion of it being articulated as an obligation of choice and subsequent permission on behalf of the "we" of Irish society. Leading from this, Busayo, perhaps acknowledging the pragmatic importance of citizenship attempts to reinforce the importance in becoming an 'Irish' citizen:

> **Busayo** First off, if you're born here and, even have the Irish citizenship, (slight pause) being from a different country (pause)…you need… to become a citizen of the nation… you need to gain Irish citizenship, you become… if I'm not born here…because it's your debt of a nation… because of your citizenship (long pause)

This sense of indebtedness or onus of responsibility to the nation connects well with nationalistic sentiment, and viewpoints expressed by the fourth interviewee, Kevin, regarding civic duty. Inadvertently or not, it does also seem to add an additional burden not only perceived by but also projected by the broader public onto an individual who may become a citizen of the nation. It is suggestive of a heightened and unequal onus of responsibility on the new 'Irish' citizen and a privilege afforded to the Irish, who are automatically granted citizenship and can thus adopt a more laissez-faire attitude to civic duties and responsibilities.

[71] An exemplar nation state being Canada, is described by Fossum (2012: 357*f.*) as fostering general principles of 'cultural and linguistic tolerance, inclusive community, federalism, interregional sharing, democracy, rule of law, and equality of opportunity, as well as respect for and accommodation of difference.'

7.2 Perceiving oneself as Irish

Molly responds to the question of whether or not being born in Ireland is an essential criterion for being 'Irish' by stating, "no I don't think it's essential, I think it's how you perceive yourself or how you feel about your own em…identity". Apparently evidenced here is a confidence in the ability to self-subscribe as Irish where perhaps the aspect of external recognition has been omitted. However, specific to identity claims, and in this case being 'Irish', would seem to be the consideration of claiming to be 'Irish' or electively belonging to Ireland and being accepted as Irish. Within the Limerick focus group discussion, Juliana informs the group that, in the context of an Irish person travelling abroad, what makes someone Irish is "…the right to be known as Irish…" Although this feature of self-understanding and 'outsider' perspective while travelling abroad and being immersed in a 'foreign' culture is mentioned in several focus group discussions, such an externalization of recognition from the self would be applicable within Ireland also.

Although race and ethnicity are discussed in more detail in the subsequent chapter, within the Naas focus group, when the question of a distinctive Irish ethnicity was discussed, it became compounded with perceived notions of racial distinction. In addition the concluding remarks seemingly challenge such concepts of Irish ethnicity. These can be seen in relation to the idea of self-subscription and are indeed quite insightful.

Colin	…I don't think there is in any country, 'cos if you identify as Irish
YB	… how do you mean, if you identify as Irish?
Colin	Like if, this is your home, this is the place you love, you like being here and you like the people then, you don't want to be anywhere else
YB	So it's a kind of, an, an affection or an affinity… an affinity to Ireland? ... is there, would it be a characteristic of an Irish ethnicity?
Colin	Would it be, be a characteristic of… ethnicity of any country?

YB …ok, that was pretty profound

Emergent in this extract, it appears that bound to self-identifying as Irish is an emotional association with Ireland that is often expressed as an affection for or an affinity with Ireland. Any understanding of a distinctive ethnicity would be based on emotional attachments that can be shared collectively. Thus perhaps it is at this point distinctions should be made between feelings or emotions towards Ireland, and 'otherness' based on alternative ways of living or 'otherness' based on phenotypes and physiological traits. The main constituents of 'Irish' identity, in this instance, are less based on fantasy and idealization of interconnected oneness with a mythological past, as Hall (1996: 3*ff.*) has described. In this circumstance, by disregarding the notion of discrete nation state ethnicities, the participant instead refers to authentic *Irishness* as being an ongoing process of affinity and desire for association. From this perspective, the implication may be that through the social construction of identity, the root processes of identification are, or should be, based on desires. Although not based on innateness, this is quite similar to the Fraudian perspective whereby 'identification means first of all trying to realize inadmissible desires, especially during childhood or adolescence' (Benoist, 2004: 19).

There is a strong emphasis within the Naas group discussion, on feelings such as affinity rather than on more concrete criteria in relation to either being or becoming 'Irish'. When discussion was raised on the difference between being 'Irish' and being an 'Irish' citizen, the response was categorical and consistent with previous comments made.

Liam Well any person born… in Ireland can be can be an Irish citizen… but to be Irish you need to love the culture, you need to … want to be part of the ah (slight pause) -

Colin It's not enough to have the passport

Liam No (long pause)

Although there is an initial emphasis on *jus soli* / birthright citizenship,[72] Liam seems to place importance on the requirement of having an affinity with Irish culture and

[72] This perception is now further divergent from law following the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum.

participation. This connects to discussion on the deconstruction of nationalism whereby for O'Brien (1971: 8*f.*) love of one's country and one's people can enter the equation, but that 'it is not easy because, for the nationalist, anyone who fails to love his country in an exclusive and collectively self-righteous way, does not love his country at all.'

Of course the ability to claim *Irishness* or self-subscribe as Irish from the perspective of an 'insider' contrasts with how one might or might not be recognised as Irish from an the perspective of an 'outsider'. Central to this are notions that rely on racialization and certain perceptions of physiognomies that are deemed as Irish. The section on racial and ethnic distinction highlights viewpoints raised specifically in relation to this (see below).

7.3 *Jus soli, Jus sanguinis* or temporal exposure to Irish culture

Within the Clondalkin focus group discussion, there appears to be an emphasis on the importance of cultural exposure rather than birthright or bloodline association. Such views conflicts with the legislative changes following the 2004 Irish Citizenship referendum, which are described by Moriarty (2006: 132) as 'the changing of rules of belonging in Ireland' (as referred to in the third chapter). Kelsey provides an additional outlook from what they had said prior to viewing the presentation, by challenging the claim that the interviewee Kevin could be 'Irish' exclusively through their bloodline descent and quite insightfully referring to exposure to the cultural norms of Irish society. However, there is slight disjuncture amongst the participants on this issue.

Kelsey If you weren't born in Ireland and didn't grow up in Ireland, what makes you Irish? ... like I mean, just 'cos your mam and dad are Irish doesn't mean you are Irish… you need to like be brought up in Ireland like, even if you're not born in Ireland as long as you're raised through the norms… or in our culture like, he was brought up in Boston like"

Brady He does kind a have a right to consider himself Irish

Christine Yeah he does yeah

Brady Because his mother and father are Irish but (slight pause)… I don't know… there's two different -

Dana But he's been Americanized so -

Brady I think there's two kinds of, every nationality there's two kinds (slight pause) there's the people that their mother and fathers are born in that country but… you were born in another country, so you can kind of call yourself half and half but -

Kelsey But he didn't call himself Egyptian

Brady At the end of the day -

Kelsey He was born there…

YB …would you consider him less Irish than the second guy?"

Brady The half and half…

Kelsey I think he was actually less Irish than the one from Iraq… cos your man from Iraq, he had a real culchie accent… you can tell that he like, he's real Irish

Brady Yeah but he… wasn't born in Ireland though

Dana Yeah but he went to primary school and all in Ireland, like

Brady I still wouldn't consider him Irish

Kelsey But your fella who is born in Egypt, you'd consider him Irish?

Brady No, I said I wouldn't… (laughter)

Kelsey Oh, right, right, right… (laughter)

Christine So you have to be born in Ireland?... (laughter)

Kelsey No… but I think I would consider him more Irish than the American fella… 'cos the American fella had an

	American accent… so he grew up in America… whereas this fella had an Irish accent so he obviously grew up in… Ireland
Dana	It showed him like in primary school in Ireland, that he liked Irish music and stuff like that,, where your man was just like, 'ah yeah, I got slagged and all, and I took offence and all'
Christine	That's probably because we're just anti-American, what do yea reckon?
Kelsey	Yeah, we really are… (slight laughter)

This conversation contains quite a few key considerations in relation to perceived *Irishness*. As previously mentioned there is an apparent emphasis on temporal exposure to cultural norms that are seen to be a primary determinant, however, there is also the suggestion of a possibility of possessing a hybridity of identities. This seems to be portrayed as a somewhat irreconcilable clash of interest, particularly in relation to the ascription of identity onto interviewee, Kevin. Being both Americanized and Irish is viewed as conflicting, through the automatic assumption that somehow possessing both cultural norms would be discordant. The justification to deem interviewee, Dijwar as being or having become more Irish than interviewee, Kevin is primarily based on the accent he possesses which in turn is rationalized as being indicative of a greater longevity of exposure to Irish norms and values. The simple recognition of having grown up in Ireland, gone through the Irish educational system and having an affiliation with Irish culture, vis-à-vis, an expression towards an appreciation of 'traditional' Irish music by Interviewee Dijwar, would appear to be judged by the participants from the Clondalkin focus group discussion, to offer sound validation of their decision to consider interviewee Dijwar "more Irish" than interviewee, Kevin. This would suggest a level of social stratification according to the ethno-linguistics of accent and language. Nonetheless it is suggestive of a more complex internalized stratification system which now subordinates perceived non-native speakers and speakers from the United States of America. Whereas before Tovey *et al.* (1989: 22) documented a language and accent stratification system that

approximated more closely the old core elite, the additional 'Other' is now present at the lowermost end of social strata.

Another focal point is the somewhat reflexive evaluation of the participants themselves, with the suggestion and confirmation that they exhibit anti-American sentiment. In the context of the analysis of all the focus group discussions, feeling anti-American does seem to surface (as highlighted above) however, it seems reasonably inconsistent with the converse self-recognition of greater adoption of perceived American traits, either by individuals within Irish society or a more general Americanization of lifestyle across multiple spheres of Irish life.

Quite unpredictably within this excerpt of conversation the participants do not overtly discuss the observations regarding the differing physiological traits amongst the interviewees. There is the sense that care is being taken to be politically correct and that is why aspects that might be associated with race are intentionally omitted from the dialogue. Taking this into account, the previous excerpt may be quite relevant and relatable to the conversation below from the Clondalkin focus group discussion, where the topic of growing up in Ireland is raised again (refer to chapter eight on ethnic and racial distinction).

7.4 Feelings of affinity towards an Irish way of being

At this juncture what becomes apparent amongst several focus group discussions is that for a person present and living in Ireland there exists an ambivalence between having an affinity with Irish culture and actively participating in Irish culture. For the most part, throughout the discussions even after deliberation and deconstruction, participants seem to create a bind by maintaining a conceptualization of Irish culture as fixed and clearly defined, while conversely acknowledging the heterogeneity of cultural practices within Irish society (as discussed in chapter eight in relation to the reification fallacy).

Within the Naas focus group discussion, the participants apparently attempt to reconcile this dilemma whereby Colin initially claims that, "…if you're ever going to identify as a nationality, you should love the nationality, not, you shouldn't say well… my parents are Irish so I must be Irish… I was born here, I must bear it".

However, as the conversation progresses the participants seem to recognise the predicament between conforming to societal expectations and cultural norms, while having the privileged ability and right to be self-expressive, nonconformist and even challenge such perceived dominant norms.[73] When this is posed the response incorporates discussion on the anecdotal account provided by the interviewee Niamh in the multimedia presentation, relating to the individual wearing their customary 'African' attire. The conversation is quite revealing and continues by discussing how societal or cultural expectations of the individual result in conformity.

Colin …you should challenge them, if they do restrict you, then you should wonder why (slight pause)

Liam I don't see why you should conform for anyone else, as in if you are proud of your culture, if you let's say, the third girl was it, the third girl said something about… the lady and the African dress, like, she, that woman was obviously proud of where she was from, she likes her tradition and she likes the… clothes, she shouldn't conform just because like, they want, the guy's boyfriend said, "oh shouldn't she blend in?"… because… if people blend in it's not unique…

Colin It's obvious that she identifies more as being, she probably doesn't identify, or I don't know… she probably doesn't identify as Irish and that is ok… that's fine"

YB But she could have an affinity for, for Ireland couldn't she?

Liam Exactly yeah, but she prefers -

Colin I think so yeah, she prefers yeah -

Liam Her dresses…

[73] The interrelated themes of privilege, entitlement and ownership were flagged within the data analysis, however due to constraints on the volume of content they are not documented discretely in the results findings chapters.

Colin	At the end of the day it's what you think… what you feel closest to you, if you feel closer to Africa than to Ireland then you're probably African (pause)
Liam	But just 'cos you are in our country, you're just in the country, it doesn't mean you have to
Colin	You can still love it and not be, but if you're… if you're going to identify as Irish that is one of the things you should, you should love the country, I don't see why else you would, you identify as Irish
YB	…it's interesting isn't it? ...it leaves us in a kind of quandary, in a paradox I think

The excerpt of conversation has several discrete and subtle inconsistencies, such as the initial reference to "our country" which is immediately corrected to a less possessive description as "the country" by Liam. In ways the questioning of dress and outward behaviour is both a discursive practice of subjectification (Hall, 1996: 2) and also resembles how conformity is bound to the presentation of the self (Goffman, 1959) and certain expectations of performance; a performance of conforming to the conventions of Irish social norms. It is as Bulter (1993: 18) defines a form of performativity identified as 'the reiterated practice of *racializing* interpellations'. However, the outcome from the collective interaction is the recognition that having affinity to a locality or nation need not require a person's active participation in the reproduction of the perceived cultural norms which dominate that locality, region or state. In fact, taking into account what seems to be a valuing of uniqueness by Liam, adhering to the ethno-cultural expectations of society may be overly conformist. Feelings of affinity and love towards the collective nation of Ireland hold utmost value. The anecdotal account of the lady wearing what is deemed to be African attire implies a zero-sum understanding of both self-identification and externally imposed identification. There does not seem to be space for the subject to express a more polygamous relationship with multiple cultures or nations, resulting in an acceptance of hybrid identities.

7.5 Chapter seven conclusions

The ascription of being an 'Irish' citizen in comparison to being 'Irish' seems to be indicative of a type of labelling as a process of distinction and 'otherness'. In the context of the focus group discussions, this would appear suggestive of a predisposition amongst some participants towards in-group exclusionary practices. In contrast, the sense is that self-identification as Irish is recognised as an emotional attachment with Ireland as expressed through feelings of affection towards the country, as well as affinity with a perceived dominant Irish culture.

Specifically in relation to the legal requirement to being 'Irish', what emerges within several focus group discussions is that cultural exposure over a temporal period is afforded significance over either *jus soli* (birthright) or *jus sanguinis* (bloodline) forms of citizenship acquisition. This becomes slightly perplexed when participants contrariwise seem to compound notions of ethnicity as being reliant on both territorial and bloodline association with Ireland and Irish descent. The seemingly recognised importance of birthright or territorial connexion is exemplified when some participants appear to somewhat reject the legitimacy of being American and claiming *Irishness*. Thus, the idealized view of being 'Irish' would seem to exclude concepts of hybrid identities. Some participants emphasize temporal exposure to the dominant cultural norms of Irish society as a solution to the hybridity dilemma. This occurs whereby contestation is made towards supposed claims of being American-Irish, but where a person is viewed to have minimal or no direct exposure to Irish society.

Amongst several focus group discussions, it appears that for a person residing in Ireland inconsistencies exist between having an attraction to Irish culture and active participation in Irish culture. A further predicament is constructed by some participants whereby Irish culture is continuously conceptualized as fixed and clearly defined, while participants also inversely recognise Irish cultural practices as heterogeneous. In relation to this, conversation evolves by discussing how socio-cultural expectations of the individual may impose conformity. Both subjectification through discursive practice and expectations of performances are shown as ways by which Irish social norms and conventional behaviours are imposed through the prism of conformity.

Chapter seven sharpens the lens of analysis to document how participants recognise being 'Irish', the power contained in the capacity to call oneself as Irish, affiliation with being 'Irish' and further ascription to being 'Irish' linking in with the previous findings chapters. Though inseparably intertwined, broadly chapter five and six analysed being 'Irish' in relation to *Jus sanguinis* association, while this chapter draws into the debate the more lived temporality of identity formation and being 'Irish'. In combination with *Jus sanguinis* bonds, chapter seven also details participants' perceived views on being 'Irish' in connection with *Jus soli* and temporal exposure to Irish culture. Subsequently, chapter eight focuses in, as the principal basis of critique, to look at the social construction of 'ethnicity', 'race' and 'the nation' in the context of perceived *Irishness* and 'Irish' identity formation.

8 Constructing Ethnicity, Race and the Irish nation

This chapter explores race, ethnicity and the nation. The initial section interconnects perceptions of the historical with notions of race and ethnicity as homogeneous. Participants express the requirement to conform to perceived norms so as to be accepted within the dominant norm of Irish society. Linking back to chapter six, within one focus group discussion emphasis is placed on temporal exposure and the acquisition of a sense of collective commonality. There was a slight aside, which is given further elaboration in the conclusion, chapter ten, in relation to the use of third person plural pronouns. The subsequent section contrasts the notion of "race" as an imaginary against "race" as a reality of representation. Across several conversations a form of reification fallacy is exposed in relation to the blurring of both ethnic and racial distinctions. The Irish are distinguishable, not only because they are perceived as "white" or "Caucasian", but further differentiated as defined as a "race apart" that is "spotted" or "freckled".

Divergent from above is the opinion that ethno-cultural transformation, as well as the erosion of the traditional in the Irish context, is seen as produced by alternative processes of globalization and not caused by the arrival of 'newcomers' together with the perceived ethno-racial diversification of the Irish collective. Subtle comments are shown as expressions of the transposition of Darwinian evolutionary theory onto the socio-cultural. Combined with this, race and diversity are interrelated to participants' perceived sense of fear/anxiety with respect to societal change.

The concluding section of this chapter provides findings on participants' notions of the reinvention of 'Irish' identity within an era of liquid modernity. Two highly illuminating, yet polar oppositional views are presented whereby one participant perceives being a "citizen is an illusion" thus we should renege control of entry and exit to the island of Ireland, while contradictorily another participant, identifies the role and advantage of the state in more stringent migration control.

8.1 Genealogical assumptions and notions of 'race'

The generalized perception, across most of the focus group discussions, of physiological traits that would characterize being 'Irish' depicts *Irishness* as of pale, 'white' or Caucasian complexion. Although there seemed to be caution in making such blatant representations within some focus group discussions, which may be due to certain participants' desire to be inclusive, it would seem that such political correctness may have resulted in over sensitivity which in fact may mask racialized bias amongst participants.

Assertions are made within the Drogheda focus group discussion, in partial response to providing a description of a distinctive Irish ethnicity, interconnecting the historical with physiological traits which persist today, in which participants recount how stereotypical notions of physiological homogeneity persistent in contemporary Irish society interdepend on notions of previous historical events, such as, settlements and invasions.

Luis …the original populations… I feel, they look a lot like Northern people, like the Vikings, or, in Ireland, especially in this, it could be my idea from, I am from Spain, I don't know a lot eh, of Nordic country, but I look and feel a lot of Nordic Viking influence… especially in this area, Dublin, Drogheda, and this eh, people walking the street, I've met my… idea of Viking…

Hubert Yeah, if you're talking about the specific, the specificity of the face, even for a friend downstairs… he's an Irish man, he's not as blond and as tall as a Nordic man, as a German or as a Scandinavian, but his hair are red… how do you say it in English?

Dillon Ginger

Hubert Yeah, gin, ginger… and his face… is very white with a little ginger in him… but it's maybe by the film of the cartoons, I don't know, white skin, very white skin…

Toben What is it? the skin looks like uh, Celtic skin… because when you see someone for example, in France or Holland or Russia or, you know the difference between the skin of an Irish man…

Rachel It's because of the weather though… the weather affects, (slight pause) for our skin and Ireland is very low…

Toben Physically they are not, they are not too big, they are not slim, you know they are not big guys… it's like average (pause)

Within this excerpt, the participants initially refer to genealogical links that originate from past settlements and invasions to illustrate a perception of physiological Irish traits as being pale and of "white skin" to the extent that it is evidently different to other countries that might also be associated with a certain Caucasian complexion. What is noteworthy, but given little prominence by how the conversation evolves, is the interjection made by Hubert, who suggests such stereotypical notions of external traits of *Irishness*, may be artificially construed through media manipulation such as films or cartoons. Such a scrutinizing eye might also question the role of manipulative elites who contend for power by influencing social divisions through propaganda through (Oberschall, 2010: 181). Nonetheless, such dimensions of identity politics is not followed up and generally remains absent from discussions.

Instead, the conversation shifts from discussing the participants understanding of Irish history in relation to the homogeneity of Irish physiological traits, to describing traits as being phenotypically determined via intergenerational exposure to Irish climatic conditions. The conversation seems to naturally progress so as to bring in other apparent physical traits of *Irishness* rather than reverting back to discussing attributes based on ethnicity, cultural qualities or questioning the foundation of their generalizations based on a more ancient past.

8.2 Becoming 'Irish' through conformity and participation

Although within all of the discussions participants provided debatable views that were either assimilationist, integrationist or more multicultural and intercultural in leaning, a central contested position emerged in relation to notions of becoming 'Irish' which relates overall to expectations of conformity. When the question is posed to participants from the Leixlip focus group discussion, the response comparing the difference between being 'Irish' and being an 'Irish' citizen initially reveals the opinion that has been stressed throughout the conversation but in different contexts. It commences by emphasizing the necessity for conformity.

Michael Like you have to fit in, I can't… once you stop standing out, I think you become fully Irish, if you get what I mean, (long pause)

Noel 'cos yeah when, 'cos when you stand out you could be classified as Irish, African or there's lots of things… you know the way like

Michael African American

Noel Yeah African American Irish

YB …can an African American, or an African Irish person, as you say, can they ever stop standing out, because of their racial - ?

Noel No I don't think [so]… I think they can 'cos, like, there are people in my school who would… have been born in Africa but like… then they moved to, at a really early age, to Ireland and like I would consider them Irish… yeah, there's a guy on our football team who moved here from Nigeria, who was born in Nigeria and stayed there until he was… like five and he's as much Irish as any of my other friends

Blathnaid Yeah, I've a friend and she lived in Holland until she was nine, so that was only four years ago and she's like

Kim [friend's name] (murmurs)

Blathnaid Yes, [friend's name], yeah she's, like I, you, I didn't even know

Kim Neither did I

Blathnaid I thought that like maybe her dad, I think it was her dad was from Holland but… like I didn't think she was like, lived there or anything

Kim Like she just started speaking Dutch to her sister and I was like, oh my god

Although initially the emphasis on conformity is suggestive of an assimilation/integrationist perspective, it seems to disregard the consideration of physiological differences that may not complement what might be considered Irish traits. However, when both of the anecdotal accounts present friends with alternative physical characteristics or past affiliations with nations other than Ireland, these seem inconsequential in the process of ascribing *Irishness* onto another person. Neither the temporal length of stay within Ireland, nor the physiological traits of a person are deemed to have importance. Instead, subtly in both instances, participation in sports activities, incorporation into friendship circles and conforming to the norms of one's peers seem to permit a person generally to be perceived as Irish. Such views appear to be comparable to the Kantian notion of civic patriotism as described by Kleingeld (2003: 303) that refer more to a present attitude of reciprocity between citizen and state, irrespective of *jus soli* or *jus sanguinis* association.

A further consideration that ties in with feelings and emotions (discussed above) but which complements the previous views expressed relates to attaining the specific nuances of Irish culture. Within the Clondalkin focus group discussion, rather than perceiving aspects of being or becoming 'Irish' as a process of conformity, evidently it is explained in less oppressive terms through the notion of commonality. In describing what it means to be Irish, Christine explains the more subtle attitudinal distinctions that might exist such as an affiliation with people perceived as Irish, not just with the nation state itself.

Christine I think comfortable when they meet other Irish people, that you've something in common with, not everybody but just certain times you're… happy enough, you know

you can just relax and you don't, there's no, people get the nuances, they know what you are about

Dana There's no messing, they understand the language…

Christine The dialect, everything (pause) and the slagging, the behind the scenes kind of stuff, they get… they get the cultural background, it's there in them, so it's there in you, it's just the politically or whatever you know, kind of there's, they know what's going on when you're slagging the government or when you make a little comment about something… they knew what that was about to them, cos they were in school with yea or, (slight pause) you know… I definitely think if kids… were in school, if kids have come through the Irish school system, you, you don't have, if you even see skin or you just hear them, you hear that they grew up in Ireland, you know…

Kelsey Yeah, if they grow up in the Irish culture from a child and they have, they don't know, they don't know their actual, let's say what, London, they don't know the London culture, they know our culture which makes them an Irish person, 'cos they can identify with Irish culture not the English culture

Christine Yeah, I think your parents, (slight pause) I think schooling and parents and something, have something to do with that as well, you know… I don't know, I think they do

Kelsey Not necessarily being born but kind of growing up in Ireland

Although there had been no impetus placed on discussing what being 'Irish' means in relation to the perceived potential 'other', the conversation seems to shift to describe it in relation to a third person 'other'. Fascinatingly, this change seems to occur where there appears to be slight confusion in interpreting 'they' within the conversation. The

third person ‘they’ is initially incorporated into the sentence to describe the generalized ‘other’ Irish person who possesses the same cultural nuances as the participant. However, the use of ‘they’ seems to shift in its use to become a descriptor of subjects who might have entered into Irish culture, unlike most Irish, and subsequently the pronoun, ‘them’ otherwise spoken.

The use of the third person plural pronouns of ‘they’ and ‘them’ in the context of the excerpt does not seem to differentiate in an intentionally derogatory or subordinating manner. Instead the language is used to underscore the proposition that a person’s formative way of life or ethnicity is the primary determiner in one being or becoming ‘Irish’, rather than one’s bloodline descent or physiological traits. The experiential, through schooling and parental upbringing within an environment of exposure to Irish culture, is given priority over both bloodline and birth-right connection to the Irish collective. The mention of accent together with seeing the “skin” of a person implies recognition of a racialized determinant in being or becoming ‘Irish’ yet it attempts to commensurably maintain *Irishness* as colour or racially blind. This implies that although notions based on race exist also as abstract signifiers that separate human groups socially, politically and economically (Lentin, 2008: 490), in the Irish context skin colour is perceived as a defining characteristic of being, or not being, ‘Irish’.

8.3 Race as an imaginary and race as a reality

Being ‘Irish’ is viewed within legalistic frameworks, and through culturally normative values attitudes and behaviours, but it also seems to be weighted heavily in relation to bloodline descent or hereditary bonds. In the Drumcondra focus group discussion, the notion of the Irish race is assumed factual by Ryan (as mentioned above), and similarly implied in other focus group discussions.[74] This perspective may not have been shared by all of the participants as is evidenced later when Carroll challenges notions of the existence of a stereotypical *Irishness* by stating, “but I don’t think it really is what it is (pause)” to which Ciara continues, referring to the heterogeneity of Irish society, by stating, “I think there’s loads of different Irish’s, Irishnesses, you know…”.

[74] Please refer to the Limerick, Drumchondra, Naas, Leixlip and Coolock focus group discussions.

Nevertheless, within the Limerick focus group discussion, when *Irishness* was referred to in racialized terms it was nuanced and the conversational viewpoints were more indicative of a cynical understanding of the notion of an Irish race, and perhaps an apropos view of the racialization of peoples more generally. The perceived difference between being an 'Irish' citizen and being 'Irish' comes to the fore in the Limerick focus group discussion, when answering one of the closing questions on whether, or not, having Irish descent is an essential criterion for being 'Irish' (along with the question, can someone become 'Irish'?). Again the legal and pragmatic dimension of the passport is initially discussed and how the conversation evolves is quite illuminating.

Juliana	If you get citizenship, does that mean you are Irish? (pause)
Dale	Does it mean like you can get an Irish passport and have Irish citizen on it, I suppose does it?
Juliana	Yeah, but does that make you Irish?
Dale	I don't know, I've never had a problem getting an Irish passport like
Charlie	Well I think, in a few words of sense Juliana, if you haven't Irish blood in yea, (pause) yeah there's a good thing there… if you're not, haven't Irish blood in you, [it] is only making an Irish citizen
Juliana	Yeah
Charlie	It's not making you Irish… as in Irish blood?...
Juliana	Yeah, blood Irish
Maebh	Yeah, I think you are dead right…
Juliana	You're not a member of the Irish race in other words… but you can…
Charlie	Or if, we'll call it species (laughter)
Adrian	Now (laughter)
Maebh	Species

Charlie You know when you look at a monkey, well… leaving evolution out of this, he's never going to turn into one style of giraffe (laughter)

The direction the conversation takes and the closing analogy would seem to reveal the underlying notion bound with being 'Irish'. In what appears somewhat satirical, Charlie refers to having Irish blood as being the distinguisher between being 'Irish' or being, in a lower esteem, an 'Irish' citizen (as discussed in the previous chapter). Having 'Irish' blood or heredity is then equated to "the Irish race", however, this is somewhat joked about by Charlie when he compares it to species. In fact, Charlie's analogy of the impossibility of a monkey becoming giraffe, in all its unnaturalness, is suggestive of the utter unfeasibility of a person without Irish blood ever becoming 'Irish'. There is the sense that these comments are being made quite sarcastically but they are also indicative of a perceived view of a dominant attitude that may prevail in Irish society more generally. As ludicrous as the sarcastic comment denotes, the questioning of the underlying logic of race resonates with the position held by Balibar (1991: *18f.*) who claims, 'there is in fact no racism without theory (or theories)…It is, however, quite clear that they are "rationalized' by intellectuals.'

Although this view of an Irish race seems to be recognised as somewhat dubious, and referred to with some level of satirical criticism, the conversation continues to reveal that the term is also conversely used in descriptive terms making its understanding both imagined and real at one in the same time.

YB Does your passport mean you're an Irish citizen?

Charlie Citizen yeah, I don't know the wording but, put down on those documents, but…

Maebh If Irish blood means that you're true Irish…

YB Irish blood means you're a true, true Irish person, so you would say then you can't, so for instance your 'Chinese' friend could never be Irish?

Adrian But she is

Juliana She is possibly not part of the Irish race

That Maebh makes the conditional sentence, rather than stating as factual Irish blood equates to being truly 'Irish', is suggestive of a level of hesitation concerning such a claim. To add to this, Adrian's recognition of a friend they had previously discussed, who had immigrated to Ireland from China when they were young and had by now spent the majority of their life in Ireland as being 'Irish', would also seem to challenge a bloodline association with being "truly" 'Irish'. Similarly, although Juliana claims that they may not be part of the Irish race, it is stated with some level of doubt. So on the one hand there appears to be recognition of the ambiguous nature and subjectivity of the term 'race' specifically in relation to *Irishness*, yet contrarily the notion itself remains imbedded within the psyche and conscience of the participants, thus maintaining its existence. That is to say, the participants did not get to the point of undermining the notional idea of "the Irish race" as a core concept that had been taken for granted. Because race is recognised as imagined, yet as a concept it is left unchallenged, fallen back on and even reproduced, it restricts different forms and comprehensions of existence that might otherwise emerge. So doing is in direct opposition to what Acampora (2007: 67) describes as the imaginary domain activating 'the possibility for change'.

8.4 The reification fallacy of ethnic and racial distinction

Within the Naas focus group discussion, the initial description of a distinctive Irish ethnicity from participants focused on rural life; that "a lot of people seem to have very strong connection with farms" (Colin), and quite mockingly on diet, in particular potatoes. Recognition is made that "well even now, you know we're not really a farming country anymore" but that still, "people tend to eat everything that they would've eaten if they lived on a farm" (Colin). When the perception of a distinctive Irish ethnicity is probed further the response given relates back to an alternative interpretation of the historical (as discussed above).

Colin I don't think there is one really 'cos, we all came, we came from Spain didn't we? The first people in Ireland came from Spain somewhere

Liam Well nowadays it's a strong mixture of different countries is in Ireland there is

Colin There is a strong mixture of different countries everywhere

Liam There's not exactly (slight pause), yeah I know but… there's not exactly one Irishness now because a lot of people -

Colin Have come in

Liam Yeah, there's a lot of different cultures in Ireland nowadays then what it would've been years ago…

YB …and are those cultures also Irish?

Colin No, not always (pause) Irish, they're different, they may not be Irish, um (pause), sometimes they become more Irish as the longer they're here… but they usually aren't when they first come

On this occasion a cultural comparison seems to be made between more ancient times, when Ireland was first inhabited, with contemporary or recent historical times. The implication is that even throughout history 'newcomers' who may have possessed alternative cultural norms have since integrated into the dominant Irish culture through assimilation. Such views would seem to correspond with Latham's (2010) description of the *subsumption pathway*, as detailed in chapter three, whereby the supposition is that eventually integration will occur through assimilation into the larger, more dominant, collective.

As the conversation progresses however, trying to describe what people might be assimilating into or pinpointing what is an Irish ethnicity, becomes problematic. Perhaps a generalized view is that "…years ago, do you know, we were all farmers, used to drink a lot" (Liam) and that "it was almost exclusively Catholic" (Colin). These generalized views seemingly emphasize a commonality of perceived cultural values, attitudes and behaviours, yet there would appear to be the opinion by the participants that they paint quite an artificial representation of Irish society. In relation to this, what might be inferred from the participants' reversion to more satirical responses to the question is that the participants might have had a difficultly clearly defining ethnicity and/or they may have genuinely found it difficult to describe a

distinctive Irish ethnicity beyond relying on superficial generalizations. When Eithne questioned how ethnicity was defined by asking, "…do you mean by the ethnicity, you're talking about colour as well? Or specific traits, are you specifically talking about the cultural norms?" Leaving this open for interpretation, the subsequent response is as follows.

Eithne Well I guess the stereotype that definitely comes is the freckly face, you know… that's what I deem of when I think of ethnicities, em, race as well, but then I think one thing that's standing out in particular, in terms of how the society is, is definitely drinking is a big part of it as well

Noticeable here is suggestion of the compounding of both cultural and what might be perceived as inherent physiological traits in an attempt to describe a distinctive Irish ethno-racial condition. By blending both, it provides the participant with a seemingly clearer, more concrete understanding of what they are self-describing, which thus prevents the questioning of the underlying notions of ethnic or racial distinctions discretely.

A previous section, elaborated in the excerpt from the Clondalkin focus group discussion, interwove ethnic notions of *Irishness* and the recognition by participants of the importance of temporal exposure to Irish culture. Continuing on what is later deliberated, the discussion relates to the effects of exhibiting physiological traits that might be interpreted as more or less Irish like. This corresponds with the problematic difficulty in distinguishing between notions of an Irish ethnicity in relation to views of race or more specifically people of differing physiological traits. Kelsey overtly raises the issue in discussion on whether, or not, being born in Ireland is an essential criterion for being 'Irish'. When the conversation reverts back to justifying one's claim to *Irishness* by simply growing up in Ireland (as discussed above) racial considerations are discussed.

Dana It's just where you grow up

Kelsey I think even like, I know it's horrible to say but with a dark person, it's, it's very hard for (slight pause) them to integrate where… if you actually are the skin colour

> it's a lot easier like… and people won't perceive you like, I mean no one would have known I was born in Birmingham, a different country, 'cos I look Irish… well I look Polish but am I?… (laughter)… but if a darker person came it's straight away, "Are you Irish?, Are you sure?" do you know like it's… so it's harder for a dark person to integrate as an Irish persona, whereas if you're white and from anywhere else but you look Irish you're grand… you can get away with it

Although this aspect of not possessing the corresponding physiological traits with what is deemed as Irish is only discussed at this latter stage of the focus group discussion, the simple acknowledgment of this predicament appears significant. This is because not only is it raising an issue that seemed to be equivocated previously, it seems to indicate an outward empathic view on what might inhibit a person from truly becoming 'Irish'. Nonetheless, it implies that the participants haven't, through participation and reflexivity, made the realization that what might be at the core of the discussion relates more to their own sense of perceived *Irishness*. Whereas *Irishness* seems to be initially perceived within boundaries delimited by specifically recognised physiological traits, these bodily traits correspond with what is viewed as dominant normative external characteristics of a person such as paleness, 'whiteness' or Caucasian. In this way race as a signifier is more pronounced than ethnicity or gender as it is based on the corporeal state rather than acts. As Butler (1988: 519) describes, gender identity is 'instituted through a *stylized repetition of acts*', so too can ethnicity, if conceived of discrete from race, be an enactment. Somehow because the bodily condition associated with race is seemingly inescapable, so too is it implausible that a "darker person" can be 'Irish'. Thus race is pronounced conceptually, in the mind, and visibly, in our perceived reality.

The extract recognises the dilemma whereby such fixed conceptions of perceived *Irishness* thus become disturbed by the expected initial realization that people with darker complexion may be excluded from being acknowledged within the Irish collective. Kelsey expresses a reaction towards a questioning attitude that potentially falsely perceives a person as 'other'. Her reaction also seems to illustrate the ease with which a person with supposedly similar skin who may not have any, or only

tenuous links to Ireland, could be afforded privilege and be more easily incorporated into the Irish collective. Although the expectation was that this bind might be more deeply deliberated and deconstructed, evidently the participants' attitudes in this conversation remain quite embedded in the reification fallacy of Irish physiological traits equating only to a Caucasian complexion.

Similar to several other opinions expressed in separate focus group discussions (as in the section of feeling Irish above), more concrete notions of being 'Irish' appear to be challenged within the Drogheda focus group discussion. Continuing on to describe what it means to be 'Irish', Toben makes an effort to go beyond conceiving *Irishness* merely through nation state affiliation and legalistically afforded criteria such as citizenship and nationality.

Toben You know that question is a bit, it's very complicated

YB Be frank

Toben Yes, being Irish, is feeling Irish, you have to feel Irish yourself, to be Irish, and eh, having Irish citizenship or being born in Ireland for me that doesn't make you Irish… and I don't know how to say this, but it's how you feel yourself, and it's hard to cut your roots, because something will bring you always there, so being Irish, for me, is feeling Irish

Leading on from this is a comment pertaining to how perceived characterizations and portrayals of *Irishness* are restrictive in racial terms. However, what is noteworthy is that such understanding of the ascription of 'Irish' identity is referenced at an earlier stage of the discussion, prior to viewing the multimedia presentation.

Toben But also, you have to be accepted by other people as Irish, because you say you are Irish, but if people don't accept you, you are not Irish, if I say now I'm an Irish man, and people don't believe you, they will clearly say "oh, yes he's Irish but he got Irish citizenship", but when you finish here, "what the, why is the black man saying he is an Irish man?" (laughter)… and he will say, "I have a friend, no he was… he has the passport"…

and better I calling him, "you, you will never be Irish man, (slight pause) a black man will never be an Irish man"… that is the truth… and that same man, he will say, "my country's going to play eh, next Friday", "which country is it?"… "Nigeria"

Irena Of course, yes

Toben But he will say he is an Irish man

There appears to be an evident connection expressed within this excerpt between being deemed an 'Irish' citizen, rather than being 'Irish', and racialized notions of what might be, or in this case, might never be perceived as Irish irrespective of the legislative reality. Initially Toben seems to expose the actual and real implications of being a "black man" and seems to be subtly critical of the fixed nature of generalized perceptions of *Irishness* that are exclusive, and thus exclude. Somewhat surprisingly however, the criticism seems to be inverted to target the "black man" who might have mixed, if not counter-allegiances. This would appear to suggest the rejection of the authenticity and compatibility of hybrid identities, yet it does not seem to discount the existence of such. As discussed (see above), not only does the participant from within the normatively dominant perspective advocate the view that exhibiting hybrid identity seems discordant with claim of *Irishness*, Toben's view would also seem to complement such a stance.

Similarly, evidence of the reification fallacy is assumed within the Belfast focus group discussion, in the participants' description of a distinctive Irish ethnicity. Tony replies, although slightly more ambiguously, "(pause) I think we just answered that one, ethnicity, well it depends how you define ethnicity, I suppose, ethnicity for Western Europe. You rarely look at skin colour, you always accepted it as white". Likewise in the Coolock focus group discussion, and the initial descriptions of a distinctive Irish ethnicity, from several of the participants, refer to more cultural aspects of living and traditional or past lifestyles. When the question is restated however, several participants demonstrate more evidently an incomprehension of the question, specifically the term *ethnicity*.

Without interjection and rearticulating of the question by the facilitator, Grainne proceeds by describing physiological traits.

Grainne White

Tierney White

Grainne For starters yeah

Tierney Ok

Conlaoch What, white?

Peadar Caucasian

Tierney So white skinned, Celtic

Conlaoch No -

Aileen No?

Conlaoch No, we're not

Tierney White skinned

Emmet Catholic

Conlaoch No, we're not… we're spotted, we are the spotted people

Tierney ha, ok, ha

Conlaoch We're a race apart, I mean

Aileen Exactly

Grainne The question was… how do I perceive Irish

Conlaoch Oh yeah, so you, so you assume it yourself

Tierney Ok, so you say white, (slight pause) you say white

Grainne I wouldn't say Caucasian

Tierney Why?

Grainne I would actually say white

Tierney You say white, ok (pause)

Conlaoch I say spotted

The implication from this excerpt seems to go beyond Marshall's (2000, 16) description of the construction of the quintessential Irish stereotype' as being based on

physiological traits of 'whiteness', as well as other characteristics, such as heterosexual, Irish born, settled and Catholic. Physiological traits are described above in even more defined and distinct terms. Conlaoch continues to seemingly justify this description by claiming that the Irish are "freckled people". Evidenced in this extract is not only the desire by several participants to distinguish the Irish as "white" or "Caucasian" but to further differentiate the Irish as a "race apart" that is "spotted" or "freckled". In the context of the overall focus group discussion, it is worth noting that Emmet, within this extract, does not make any affirmation regarding physiological traits, nor are those challenged. Instead, Emmet, on several occasions apparently interjects in an attempt to relate *Irishness* to the religious affiliation of Catholicism. If cultural habits can be shaped by institutions of religion, this would seem a more appropriate answer to the initial question posed.

8.5 Ethno-racialized identity ascription

A continuation of conversation in answer to what it means to be 'Irish' within the Coolock focus group discussion, leads on to discuss how the Irish have now become more heterogeneous in relation to physiological appearance. This realization seems to give rise to some awkwardness when the racialized associations made (as discussed above) are viewed in relation to what was once a supposed homogenized nation.

> **Aileen** I would say that the Irish people now, really, I know this is going to sound bad but, more of a mixture, like you know, yea, you can… you can be standing, I remember standing in a chemist and the, it's quite a while ago, and there weren't that many people from other nationalities living here and it was a real Dublin accent and I turned around and the girl was black and I nearly died like you know… because it wasn't something I expected…

Within this short excerpt Aileen seems to express an acceptance of how in contemporary times the Irish can be conceived as having greater heterogeneity. By stating, "I know this is going to sound bad but", the implication may be that such notions of homogeneity can naturally be challenged but such negation should be perceived negatively and as undesirable. It is also implied that the individual might

have a nationality that doesn't correspond to their accent, which would be attained through cultural exposure over time. This is suggestive of an ascription of identity that might be termed hybridity (as elaborated above). Such speculation on the nationality of the individual in the pharmacy, as described might also be interpreted as a means of subjugation below the status of simply being seen and perceived as Irish. Following on from expressions of conflicting views regarding *Irishness*, the conversation reverts back, somewhat reflexively, to describe what becomes as much a critique of broader society as a self-critique on the part of Aileen. Evidently Aileen disagrees with Tierney's and Conlaoch's notional views that the Irish have inherent attributes, such as being "…wired to think a particular way and to behave in a particular way" (Conlaoch). Instead Aileen expresses that it is a person's location of birth that determines their acceptance into the Irish collective.

Aileen Well I disagree, I don't think that Irish people are particularly right, as I say that, that was a real turning point that day, that girl because that girl was, was black and she had the Dublin accent, so I think it's because she was born here, so you feel… she's of my people

In truth, the notion of hybridity extends beyond identification and allegiances with specific countries; it can also be interpreted in how people view hybridity in the form of external physiological traits a person might be perceived to possess. For instance, an initial post-viewing comment is made in the Drogheda focus group discussion by Machie who seems to focus attention on such external traits:

Machie Well, out of the four interviews there… I would say the first person, would have been the most striking Irish person…yeah, even though she was from (an) African origin…she had a lot of freckles on her face… and that's an Irish person too…you know apart from that, the accent was very strong

This opening of discussion post-viewing may be revealing of how, more often than not, an individual may subliminally evaluate and read a person through the visual firstly. Within this process of constructing first impressions, bias enters in an attempt by the mind to decode, categorize and ascribe a generalized identity onto the person

built on presumptions. Such processes of socio-psychological presuppositions becoming embedded in the individual's consciousness may likely occur within a collective that accentuates the immutability of singular identity distinctions rather than conceiving identities as fluid and variable. The fixity of a person's external physiological traits will likely complement such a process. Thus the process compounds one's racialized labelling together with one's ethnicized labelling which makes it hard to challenge or transgress the association between *Irishness* and paleness, 'whiteness' or being Caucasian.

Many of the participants within each of the focus group discussions did respond to the initial post-viewing question, which was quite open and was unspecific concerning physiological traits, by referring to the interviewees' external visible traits rather than the audio content or overall disposition. Within the Belfast focus group discussion, the initial post-viewing comment as above is, "it was very interesting to see so many walks of life, you know, and people from different parts of the world with a wee bit of family here, you know, Irishness doesn't actually have a colour or a language".

Furthermore, in the focus group discussion, the following query is conjectured:

> **Eddie** …the first one, the girl, I wondered were you playing a game with us, did the visual in fact match the audio at all…because the girl obviously had a, an Irish accent…and what she was saying, I suppose, didn't give me the impression, or I didn't feel the impression that she might have had an ethnically different background…the images clearly show that she had…and I thought, he's playing a game with us, do-you-know…but then when it went on then, and the images sort of fitted the audio, then I decided, no he's not playing a game that, he's not playing a game with us

Within this excerpt Eddie appears to express, somewhat accurately, a suspicion that the visual and audio material may not match. However, Eddie's comments go beyond the manipulation that was conducted in the production by suspecting and doubting that the accent from either of the female interviewees corresponded with the visual images of the first interviewee, Laura. Similar to what is previously discussed (see

above), by linking the visual stimuli with the notion that "she might have had an ethnically different background" (Eddie), ethnicity becomes merged with physiological traits. When compounded with notions of race, the comprehension of ethnicity as a social identifier seems to result in the assumption that ethnicity has certain constituents that are 'assumed "givens"' (Geertz: 1973: 259). Furthermore, it implies that ethnic attachments are not only temporally attained through exposure but are biologically and innately acquired (Tovey *el al.*, 1989: 5). By binding a perceived notion of cultural ways of life that are collectivized into distinct groups, together with racialized notions, it entraps the individual into only conceiving *Irishness* in restrictive terms that do not complement the theorization which proposes that identities are fluid and socially constructed. As such, the impression is that an ethno-racial bind based on the reification fallacy occurs in the psyche of some participants.

8.6 Societal transformations, 'newcomers' and discriminating fear

In contrast within the Leixlip focus group discussion, when a distinctive Irish ethnicity is elaborated as a distinctively Irish way of life, the participants make no reference to phenotypes or physiological traits. Instead the participants refer to Irish sport and athletics more generally. When the facilitator asks, "can we say there is a distinctive Irish way of life?" the response seems relatively unequivocal amongst the participants.

Kim	Not really
Michael	Not really, no, umm (pause)
YB	Not really?
Blathnaid	Lots of like, people from other countries have now, like moved here so now I think it's not really, it's mixed, like cultures and stuff… like they might do some Irish things but like, they'd still be raised like maybe how their grandparents were raised or something, some, like, a lot of people are from other countries now in Ireland

Kim	And it's mostly only the like older people who still have, like still do what they did when they were younger and all
Noel	Yeah, 'cos we watch a lot of American tv and… like Nickelodeon and stuff
Michael	Eating like processed foods, that aren't from Ireland
YB	So…the culture that we absorb... isn't really Irish?
Kim	No
Noel	It's all imported stuff
Kim	From America and stuff like
Michael	British

Although this goes in a different tangent away from the ethno-racial considerations, the conversation does appear to reveal significant reflections concerning notions of the traditional versus cultural appropriation within the context of transnational trade and a globalizing world. Evidently, there is the subtle undertone and recognition that although there have been changes leading to a perceived greater cultural heterogeneity with migration, a more dominant effect on what seems to be perceived as a distinctively Irish way of life is media exposure and consumption patterns determined and influenced primarily from the global powers of America and Britain. These perspectives would appear to complement the description by Inglis (2008: 2) of the effects of globalisation, whereby it is perceived that local everyday life in Ireland is becoming global, and to a lesser degree Americanised. The cultural absorption is also overt in the language use of the young participants within this focus group discussion, with the adoption of Americanisms such as an incessant use of "like" and the pattern of sentence formations in replies, interjections and questionings (as below also).

Leading on from this, the question is posed as to what the participants perceive is "a distinctive Irish traditional way of life?" in order to elicit what might be meant by a traditionally Irish way of life and how it might be described. Although quite generalized and romanticized, the participants' views of traditional Ireland may reveal an understated component of transnationalism.

Kim	You know go out and milk or whatever
Michael	Independence I'd say
Noel	Yeah… like on the bog and stuff…
YB	So again, kind of generalizations though right, and how do you mean by independence?"
Michael	Well I mean, when, kinda (slight laughter), I (slight pause), I like (laughter) yeah
Kim	From a young age they were like going out
Michael	Yeah like, when my granny was young and stuff like that… she like, they wouldn't really, like in America, they would be kind of (slight pause), kind of fed by their parents, if you know what I mean, like when you think of old people in Ireland, you think of kids like, milking cows and -
YB	Ok, so you mean a kind of sustainability, like producing their own products?
Michael	Yeah, like not having to buy stuff from shops, making it themselves

Within this extract the facilitator assumed that the "independency" the participants refer to relates to a greater level of self-sufficiency within the lifestyles of traditional Irish living. However, what becomes apparent is that the independence may have been initially mentioned concerning the responsibility and also freedom young individuals in the past might have had, thus associating it with a higher level of independence.

Above all, implicit to the content in both excerpts above, would seem to be the perception of tradition and independence in the Irish context being challenged through exposure to hegemonic cultural production from abroad. The traditional would appear to be portrayed as having greater self-sustainability with localized food production and consumption, as well as, energy resources whereas at present individuals' existence seems increasingly dependent on and encroached on by external forces.

Linking in with the except that was documented above concerning historical change, within the Drumcondra focus group discussion, the participants respond to the idea of re-imagining identity in the twenty-first Century by first mentioning cultural diversity. They continue by providing a more optimistic opinion of immigration and increased pluralism.

Carroll That's a difficult… question

Ryan I would see it as a mix, you know a mix of new citizens… really with whom we're bringing, you know, differences with them, you know, and I think it'll greatly enrich the country, in many different ways, so it's a -

Ciara Different outlooks you know, they're bringing

Ryan Different outlook, customs, you know… there'll be… more, you know, diverse… and interesting country as a result… you know, if that happens

Carroll I think it will be very enriching

Ciara If that happens in the right way

Carroll You know, what, it's strong, what's strong and what's (pause), what's strong survives in any culture, and we hope it's the good parts that survive… and if the other bits come in and they mix in with it and make it better

Ciara An enriching of both things… and then there's always the downside, the opposite of that as well, but one would, I personally would hope that it would all be the positive stuff…

YB …what would you see as an enrichment or 'positive'?

Ciara Alternative solutions to situations that maybe Irish people wouldn't have viewed, whereas another culture, another group of people could come in and think, well, 'could we try this?'"

Eddie A less insular attitude…

Ryan Enriching the gene pool maybe… (slight laughter) you know

The conversation progresses in a generally optimistic tone, yet it seems as though, following the previous remarks that were made throughout the focus group discussion by the same participants it is embellished and slightly contradictory (as evidenced from extracts above and detailed in the previous chapter). The participants seem to have reverted to a more politically correct and seemingly progressive stance in relation to diversity. There are subtle comments within the conversation that are nonetheless indicative of a reliance on notions of inherent naturalness and the transposition of Darwinian evolutionary thought onto the socio-cultural, such as notions of survival of the fittest and enrichment, genetic or otherwise. In fact somewhat in contrast to what was portrayed in relation to resisting change and the fear of the new, Ryan seems to refer to identity as changeable, "it's not fixed, (pause) it would be, I think, there's an element of Darwinism in this, in this whole thing, you know, if you don't adapt or you don't change then you're going to falter…". Societal change in Darwinian and evolutionary terms becomes blended with a pragmatic yet quite vague view of Irish societal advancement. When combined with themes detailed within the previous excerpts, this assumption of linear progress, as critiqued by Clifford (2000: 105), would appear to subtly emphasize a fatalism of culturally assimilated oneness, being shaped by the forces of globalisation.

What also emerges overall is a general sense that the participants' frame of reference, albeit providing apparently quite liberal stances, emphasizes the benefits quite ethnocentrically. Neglected in the conversation is a form of empathy (discussed in further detail in the following chapters), or the recognition and consideration of the benefits that may be gained by 'the newcomer' in becoming accepted within what is deemed as Irish.

Somewhat alternatively, the conversation on the difference between being 'Irish' and being an 'Irish' citizen in the Coolock focus group discussion, evolves away from the technical/legal aspects to seemingly point out the less tangible sense of "feeling" or "wanting" and "desiring" to be 'Irish' (as discussed above).

YB Or is there a difference?

Emmet No…I think what Aileen said was I think it's a feeling that Irishness, and, (slight pause) but that may not necessarily be (pause) how would I say, an all-encompassing thing because maybe as we embrace more cultures what, (slight pause) the feeling of what being Irish is, may (slight pause) become something different to us and our generation…

Tierney And that's a fear for us, that's a fear for us… it's a fear that

Emmet …your analogy there about you know where, where Africa is now is like where we were two hundred years ago, or whatever… and (slight pause) yeah it's, it's on a bigger scale, it's on a huge, it's a, a much bigger scale, it's, it's much like our land was pillaged and plundered, the whole continent and that's why they can't… rise out of their poverty or whatever, but they are moving out into the world… and we're actually going, "ah hold on a minute"…

Tierney …yeah but that's a self-preservation thing right, we, like, there's we have, we will help people along the way, welcome people in here but there has to be a limit, for one, for our state of mind, I, in my opinion the state of mind, the Irishness that we have, this place that we have, cannot absorb another four million in the next say ten years, and still be the same country that we have now, that's just doesn't make sense, I, let's say twenty years, another four million… and I, maybe I'm exaggerating the, the numbers, but I'm just saying, that it creates a fear when we say that it's open door, it's unlimited… we will… never ever stop anybody coming in here

Emmet I don't think Tierney… (multiple voices)

Peadar Can I just come back to the question and illustrate it, I worked for a guy who -"

Tierney It doesn't make me a racist to say that

Peadar continues to describe a person from Zambia who is an engineer that came to Ireland with his family and whose son grew up and went through the Irish education system. Peadar refers to the son as Irish, by stating that the rationale for the son gaining employment was "because he was Irish". The conversation reverts back to discussion above.

Emmet I mean, just to, sorry address what… Tierney [was] going on about there… I think that's more of a hypocritical kind of Irish thing that we have, which is, the Irish have gone out all over the world… and we're very proud, and we actually believe… wholeheartedly -

Tierney We built America

Emmet By going out we did a great thing… but yet we can't get our heads around these people coming to us could do great things for us

Tierney No, no, no I'm not saying, I'm saying people of course can come in here and do great stuff for us, but it's the numbers, it's the ratio… that's unlimited

YB In relation to the ratio that's unlimited, an unlimited number of people from Poland could come into Ireland tomorrow

Peadar Correct

Tierney Yes, yes that's a fear

The basis for the counter-argument presented by Emmet rests on an understanding of the historical past of Irish emigration. In contrast to the excerpt from the focus group referenced above, Emmet does seem to make some acknowledgement of the plight of 'others' within a more globalized world with widening inequality, though it is mentioned in more sympathetic, rather than empathetic terms by referring to the historical plight of the Irish during the famine. Initially Tierney argues against a

policy of unlimited migration yet this seems quite clearly directed at migration from developing economies.[75] Although there appears to be self-reflection on the sentiment of fear towards unlimited migration, it does seem to be relatively nonfigurative. This anxiety based on an abstract and notional idea of an overwhelming of the "Irish" population via immigration seems racialized as in fact, hypothetically at present the real and existent way such could occur would be from populations within the European Union. Although Tierney does confirm that concern would exist about migration into Ireland from the broader European Union and beyond, it would seem permissible to an extent once the 'newcomers' as Emmet states "could do great things for us". What would seem to be subtly evidenced in this extract within the Coolock focus group discussion, as well as responses to the question on having Irish descent, is a criterion for acceptance into the Irish collective being based on whether or not the respective individual will be beneficial to the country. Such a position is very unidirectional, in effect seems quite usurping, differing from the sense of an assimilationist view but supporting a more racial neo-liberalist standpoint (Goldberg, 2009; Kapoor, 2013; Lentin, 2015). It differs from neoconservatism in that it does not purport to conserve a traditional status quo, instead it incorporates those that are worthy 'newcomers' if they can "do great stuff for us" (Tierney).

In a post viewing comment the aspect of change evoking fear is also remarked upon by Emmanuel within the Drogheda focus group discussion and is described apparently as a reaction to a perceived threat to the stability of one's own apparent culture and self-identity.

Emmanuel …our identity or identity… it comes stronger when we feel that something might happen… you know like, (slight pause) we become more part of our self… when we have to fight against the losses of our culture… that's why sometimes you will, you feel you know Irish when you are, somebody asks what makes him Irish, he will tell you, eh, Catholic, you know… and these eh (slight pause), because they, they're fighting against the change in their identity, that is the point… so,(long

[75] This is subtly emphasized in the final interjection stating "…that's **a** fear" rather than, "that's **the** fear"

> pause) the fear is to loss our culture, is to lose who we are or who we believe we are, that is the fear… and when you, change, when you leave your country, you go to another country, (slight pause) and you hear the music, that's the music, a song of your own country somewhere you feel powerful, you feel proud of being from your country… and that… is higher than when you are in your own country and you hear the same music

Emmanuel's concluding comments within this segment could easily be related to conversations that were prevalent within other focus group discussions on being 'Irish' abroad. It emerges in several of the discussions (as discussed in the previous chapter) that one's sense of affiliation to *Irishness* and closeness would be intensified when abroad or in a setting as the minority.

This extract is revealing as it would seem to provide the perspective of the 'newcomer' having lived abroad and their sense of sentimentality. When placed within the context of the previous excerpt, it makes conspicuous a commonality between both the 'native' and the 'newcomer'. Both have constructed their self-identity based on associations with their respective nations, but with changing lives, either as the new arrival or the host, there is a heightened sense of fear and anxiety. It would not be unreasonable to conjecture that for the 'newcomer' their fear would be more accentuated and may potentially deepen regret at their extraction from the habituated lives they had led before. Also compounded within this may be that the 'newcomer' also carries the burden of a fear of rejection by the 'natives'.

8.7 Re/imagining *Irishness*

In alleviating the perception of fear or anxiety that might be related to the sense of a loss of culture or loss of self-identity within the continuum of liquid modernity, an obvious remedy would be the re-imaging of what it means to be 'Irish'. Prior to any additional questions being asked pertaining to concepts of reimagining 'Irish' identity within the Drogheda focus group discussion, conversation recurs on the importance of not only self-recognition but the recognition by 'others', or the ascription of 'Irish'

identity, in legitimating one-self to fully claim *Irishness*. This seems to lead into a revealing disclosure that acknowledges an anxiety that hadn't been expressed by other participants within the other focus group discussions.

Emmanuel …in the modern world now eh, I think Irish, Irish man will be, (slight pause) different, will not be just black, he will not be just white, he will not be just Catholic, he will not be just Muslim but is everything together, you understand, eh, it's like a rainbow, rainbow country now we are living in (slight laughter)… yeah, we have to accept that, I believe that if we accept that way… eh, it will be a peaceful country, (slight pause) if everyone can accept that this one can be Irish… even though he looks Chinese, he can be Irish, (slight pause) really he can be Irish because, (slight pause) if someone asks me how, where I'm from, (slight pause) if I have Irish passport, I say "I'm from Ireland" and he is Irish, you look at me again (laughter)… you understand?... I tried to do it here before you know, someone asked me, [I replied] "well I can say I'm from Kerry" the person looked at me (laughter)… and, another just laughed (laughter)… you understand?

Ezinwa He became satisfied

Emmanuel Yeah (laughter)… we have to accept it that, it's not just I have to be like this to be Irish… I am Irish because I am accepted to be Irish, I have the citizenship… I feel Irish, like other Irish people, and I want to give something to Ireland

YB So, can I, (slight pause) to me what you're suggesting is reimagining what Irishness is, or reinventing Irishness…

Emmanuel I think it's already done, yeah forsaken us (laughter)

YB … ok so what's interesting, no because what you're saying, you're coming back to the law, it definitely is already done

Emmanuel Yes

The implication of what Emmanuel is suggesting seems to be that *Irishness* has, in recent times, been reinvented but that it has neglected to embrace people of skin colour other than 'white' and perhaps, from the perspective of Emmanuel particularly, people who may have more recent genealogical links to sub-Saharan Africa. Emmanuel appears to highlight both the differentiation that is made between being 'Irish' and having 'Irish' citizenship, the somewhat inconsequentiality of self-subscribing as Irish without external recognition and the desire to be a "good" citizen, who self-acknowledges both their rights and responsibilities. Yet, even after all, Emmanuel feels "forsaken" as Ireland changes within the continuum of contemporary modernity. By referring back to law, the facilitator shows how in concrete terms, the changes in the 2004 ICR reinforce or, make exclusion tangible for certain groups and thus engender a sense of forsakenness. Such a sense of the forsaken subject resembles the notion of 'the abject' (Butler, 1993: 3*ff.*; Coates, 1997: 78*f.*). The person that is not recognised as being 'Irish' is instead forsaken through abjection, either literally or conceptually within the process of defining what is, and what is not Irish.

Whereas it is recognised that there always has been space to manoeuvre around the 'elusive ambiguities in Irish identity' so as 'to reimagine who "we" are' (O'Toole, 2000: 22), within the Belfast focus group discussion, participants more directly propose civic *Irishness* as a means of reimaging an alternative to ethnic *Irishness*, and seem to somewhat dismiss the idea of having Irish descent as an essential criterion for being 'Irish'.

Tony …there's this idea of an ethnic Irishness and whatever that means, I know it's a complex area, and civic Irishness… you know that… and yes if you came here at eighteen and had been here for five years and had got the Irish passport and living in, you know, no-one would have a (problem), well apart from the old, well plenty of racists, most progressive people wouldn't have

a problem with you saying I'm Irish person, I can live here, I have a family here, you may know him maybe five years, but even those people wouldn't consider you to be ethnically Irish… probably for good, for good reasons usually, because you have, you don't have those… genetic is a horrible word, you know what I mean, ancestry links here, so that ethnic versus civic is perhaps where the debate lies, you know, what you do is, we always promote civic nationalisms as a more positive way forward rather than ethnic nationalisms, cos that gets into kind a horrible , you know Ukraine, Kiev territory, you know what I mean, Nazis and fascists so, but I haven't had a problem with someone Irish, cos they've only been here for three or four years and got a passport

Reagan That's their choice

Molly Yeah, if they want it, who I am I to tell them

Although the general perception from contributions within this extract does seem to suggest a more inclusive understanding of *Irishness*, it does nonetheless appear to contain some latent foundational views that are left unchallenged. Individuals, irrespective of their ethnic or genealogical background are viewed equally as Irish and a proposed solution to overcoming dominant ethnic nationalistic sentiment is civic nationalism. There is even a questioning of self-identity based along essentialized ethnic lines in comparison with civic *Irishness* which implies a level of understanding of identity as being similar to what Hall suggests (1996: 3*f.*) as multilayered whereby superficially imposed "selves" layered over the deeper buried true self. However, by alluding to the perceived views of the dominant norm that might deem the 'newcomer' as not being ethnically Irish, the participants would appear to avoid criticizing the foundational basis of ethnic *Irishness* in the first place. Again the reference to genetics and ancestral links would seem to compound ethno-racial notions that create a bind through its reification fallacy. The justification for not extricating both may be because to do so might perturb the participant's self-

recognised value and the capital put into developing and appropriating perceived Irish cultural norms into their private family lives and their own sense of 'Irish' identity.

Not all ethnic characteristics traditionally associated with a stereotypical 'Irish' identity are accommodated within the participants' views of maintaining cultural practices. Similarly to above, what seems to emerge as the conversation progresses is a direction that develops on the notion of civic *Irishness*. The impetus of such appears driven by a rejection of the historical role of religion in the formation of an Irish ethnicity.

Molly …what I'll work towards is a settler socialist society of Ireland… I'm never gonna get it, you know, in my lifetime, but that's what I would like Irishness to represent, if you know what I mean, em, so you try to create your own reality as opposed to going, 'well Jesus, it's just the way that it is'…

Tony Which is why you opt your kids out of religion… why you work for an anti-racist organization… why you challenge fascism and racism when you see it, but -

Molly And support trade unions

Tony But on… your own terms, not on liberal, woolly multicultural terms, but on fairly strong political terms

The consensus from the participants seems to be an orientation and emphasis on what is termed as a "settler socialist society of Ireland" that has rejected religion, fascism and racism. Instead what is given prominence is the agency of the politically engaged individual that has the free will to fashion their own reality which concurrently supports 'others' through trade unionism. In a sense this extract would seem to provide an understanding and definition of civic *Irishness* as a concept to supplant notions of ethnic *Irishness*. Their inclination would appear more supportive of the concept of civic patriotism, as described by Kleingeld (2003), but with conceivably less cosmopolitan qualities.

Somewhat complementing the stressed importance of the political, within the Coolock focus group discussion, participants discuss the difference between being 'Irish' and

being an ‘Irish’ citizen. Tierney views political participation as having greater significance and states, “well voting ah, is very important, being ‘Irish’ and an ‘Irish’ citizen, you must vote, I think that’s, that’s…that one should transcend both”. Although this seems quite rudimentary and self-explanatory, it does appear to indicate the pragmatic and legal similarity between both. By observing *Irishness* in current political terms only and by exaggerating the democratic process, it neglects to fully contemplate an alternative that listens to the voices of minorities, nor does it directly challenge the construction of the majority-minority dynamic that may remain persistent over time.

Within the Coolock focus group discussion, a very revealing debate on who is entitled to be an ‘Irish’ citizen ensues primarily between Conlaoch and Tierney. Both participants provide starkly contrasting opinions and the discussion leads towards an analogy provided by Tierney which is quite illuminating.

Tierney	Who’s entitled?
Conlaoch	Anybody who wants to be as far as I’m concerned
Keela	Anyone, yeah
Tierney	No, I don’t agree with that…
Keela	No?
Conlaoch	I’d say anybody that wanted to be, I mean citizen, is… citizen is an illusion and -
Keela	If you want to be they’re obviously here, aren’t they?
Tierney	No
Conlaoch	But citizen is an illusion… does citizen mean that you belong to a state? I don’t belong to the state… I do not belong to the state
Emmet	Citizenship is a very bureaucratic thing
Conlaoch	It is yeah… it’s a Roman, it’s of these Roman things that the Romans brought into England, and then, or into Europe anyway and then they inflict it on us, we don’t want it

Grainne That wasn't the question

Conlaoch Sorry

Grainne If they want, obviously who's entitled, if...

YB I think it's a valid answer

Grainne If they're looking for entitlements… but if they're looking for entitlements surely they want to be a citizen… so

Conlaoch Yeah but they mightn't -

Grainne Anybody who wants that

Conlaoch If they want to… if they want to live on the island… who wants to live, people who want to live on the island and -

Tierney No I'm more, more protective of the island o' that to be honest with you

Conlaoch No but the -

Tierney I'm protective of what's here…

Conlaoch They're all our own people coming home, people, the people who come here are our own people, we don't get any foreigners here…

Emmet And again Tierney there's people all over the world claimed citizenship… and they never came back here

Tierney I'm just saying like a lot of… just because someone decides that they want to be a citizen of the country… we're not eh, I don't regard the island of Ireland open door like that, and no, I may be wrong… but that's just my position on it, that's the way I feel about it

Conlaoch Well I'm more egotistical than that, because I actually believe that the people who are coming here to settle here are… they won't be returning home

Up until this point the debate has exposed counter-opinions that either challenge the very notion of citizenship itself or attempt to rely on citizenship as a mechanism of protectionism. The discussion would seem to highlight the difference between having acquired 'Irish' citizenship in contrast to the consideration of actually being physically present on the island of Ireland. Participant Conlaoch seems to value 'newcomers' settling in Ireland with the intention of staying and being completely part of Irish life, however, Conlaoch appears to reject the notion of 'newcomers' being foreigners in the first place. Whereas, implied from Tierney's response the state concept of citizenship is valued because it can be utilized to restrict access to the island.

8.8 Chapter eight conclusions

The homogeneity of Irish physiological traits, in particular pale and 'white' skinned, is perceived as reliant on a fixed historical understanding that links back to a Celtic eon. It seems to be phenotypically determined though intergenerational exposure to the Irish environmental setting and climatic conditions. The portrayal is that such perceptible phenotypes are deeply imbedded in historical ancestry and so they have become naturalized to become synonymous with an imagined purity of *Irishness*.

From the perspective of the participants it would seem that conformity is an expected requirement towards being recognised as a member within the dominant norm of society and that such views seem more aligned with an assimilation/integrationist perspective rather than an inter- or multiculturalist perspective. Within considerations of becoming 'Irish', it appears that physiological traits are inconsequential within the process of reading *Irishness* onto somebody. Noteworthy is that within one focus group discussion, the notion of commonality, as opposed to conformity, stimulates greater attention. As described by one participant, commonality is acquired through temporal exposure and maturation within Irish society, which in turn can lead to social integration.

Emergent from the transcribed material seems to be that the concept of "race" as an imaginary is juxtaposed against "race" as a reality. It is assumed and implied within several focus group discussions that the Irish are a discrete "race" sometimes as

imagined through myths and historical tales, but also at times in perceived reality, through the ascribed notion of a phenotypically determined *Irishness*.

As evidenced in conversations, a process is exposed whereby the compounding of ethnic and racial distinctions creates a form of reification fallacy. From the analysis of participants' conversation, it would seem that ethno-racial first impressions are related to socio-psychological processes which arise with the ascription of identity. Interpretations of ethnicity seem to be perceived by some participants as reliant on primordial or even innate attachments. Thus, the occurrence of such a reification fallacy appears to be when Irish ethnicity is conceived of as innate, together with racialized notions of a purity of *Irishness*. At the psychological level this creates an ethno-racial impasse and the effect of such presumptions results in the accentuation of recognising distinctions based on a single identity which is absolute rather than hybrid, multiple and changeable.

Contrary to views which seem reliant on the reification of racial-ethnocentrisms, cultural change, along with the extinction of what is deemed traditional, seem superficially caused by processes of globalisation, rather than the arrival of 'newcomers' and the apparent ethno-racial hetergenization of contemporary Irish society.

Further evidence is presented which seems to highlight that although social change is perceived by participants as inexorable, social progression is conceived of under social Darwinist terms. Specifically, the transposition of the biological concept of evolutionary change onto the social creates a sense of linear advancement, which would seem to originate from fixed understandings of the historical.

Furthermore, with respect to social transformation, contemporary notions of race and diversity give the impression of affecting people's perceived sense of anxiety. The notional view that immigration will overwhelm the Irish population is perceived as an anxiety that creates a sense of fear amongst the broader public. Characteristically the appearance presented by participants would seem to be that such a perceived sense of fear amongst the wider population is discriminatory. Conversely, evidence describes how fear, as felt by the 'newcomer', is likely heightened and may also be compounded with a sense of fear of rejection from the dominant 'indigenous' population.

The perception presented within one focus group discussion is that although *Irishness* has been reinvented, it still denies the possibility that people of skin colour other than 'white' can be 'Irish'. The feeling seems to be that Ireland, within the continuum of contemporary modernity, has forsaken some people and that this has been reinforced through the legislative changes in the 2004 ICR. Another noteworthy view expressed, pertaining to re/imagining *Irishness*, is the proposition of civic nationalism rather than ethnic nationalism. Although this occurs, participants seem to sidestep reflecting on and criticizing the foundational basis of ethnic *Irishness* overall. In relation to reinventing *Irishness*, a view that is advanced, but is challenged by another participant within the same focus group discussion, seems to express a completely alternative comprehension of citizenship whereby the notion of 'newcomers' as being foreigners is rejected outright, with the implication that no-one can lay claim to belong more or less than another to any locality universally.

Within the holistic framing of this thesis, the focal-point from the outset has been notions of race, ethnicity and the nation state as assumed absolutes or otherwise. Thus the findings and results culminate in chapter eight by building on previous findings from discussions to present more depth on cultural and physiological traits that are notionally Irish, under the terms of race and ethnicity. The focus of chapter eight has been less the use of such terminology in data analysis and more the use of such terminology, or explicit associations with such terminology, as expressed by participants. What emerges is how participants' understandings of *Irishness*, which have been presented thus far have in fact been tacitly dependant and essentially underpinned by perceived views of ethno-racial in/distinction. Continuing from this pinpoint, chapter nine opens the view widely to picture perceived 'Irish' identity in its entirety in relation to visions of 'good' governance, migration controls and globalization.

9 *Irishness*, governance, migration controls and world views

In order to gain an understanding of the interplay between society and how 'Irish' identity is socially constructed within an era of fluid modernity, it would be remiss not to scrutinize individuals' perceptions of political order and state governance; in particular, how the apparent opinions of participants relate to governance at a state level and beyond.

The initial section of this chapter addresses participants' perceptions of Irish governance specifically with regard to the welfare nation state. From here, participants' sense of the benefits of the welfare state, as well as rights and responsibilities are explored. A significant theme that emerged relates to participants' understandings of "free" education, healthcare provisions and the welfare state. The following section details how the welfare state is perceived as flawed both because of maladministration of state policies and practices and because of abuse by citizens. Participants also allude to the oppositional condition of "us" and "them" in discussing who can avail of state provisions. The notion of "us" as opposed to "them" is described in a simplistic anecdotal account which relies on notions of familial association and is underpinned by ideology associated with private ownership.

The second section of this chapter addresses perceptions of conservatism more explicitly. Participants also recognise the shift from welfare based provisions towards a more neo-liberalist approach. Within the Belfast focus group discussion, participants go so far as to imply in a critical manner that *Irishness* is characterized by values of conservatism. The subsequent section introduces the perceived dominant role the Catholic institution has played in Irish governance and preserving conservative values. Linking with discussion in the previous chapters seven and eight is the significance of nation state governance in the management and conservation of border and migration controls. Opposing views are presented, one justifying more stringent controls to counter the perceived threat to security, while in contrast, intra-European migration based on labour economics is viewed as ultimately counterproductive.

The third section of this chapter focuses on the juxtaposition of rational or irrational pragmatisms within predilections towards neo-liberal cognisance and governance. Further analysis of some participants' responses to the outcomes of the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum expose compliant support of legislation as fixed and predetermined. Evidence is presented to indicate an assimilationist position held by some participants, who would necessarily oblige the assumed migrant 'other' to acquire English, specifically because it is the dominant language spoken in Ireland. A subsequently detailed example of perceived rational pragmatism detailed relates to consumerism. Some participants express propensities towards buying Irish and prioritizing the Irish but these are juxtaposed against a lack of reflection and conversation on altruism, resource acquisition and global inequalities. A further example of perceived rational pragmatism is evident in the management of cultural appropriation and assimilation through emigration and returnee migration. An inversion of perceived rational pragmatism is presented whereby one participant proposes that anyone should have true freedom of movement, residence and equal claim to Ireland. Nonetheless it is refuted by another participant from the same focus group discussion for being unmaintainable and indefensible.

The final section of this chapter examines perceptions of governance, regionalism in the context of European governance, and globalization. Quite polarized positions on Irish versus European governance are identified. Participants view European governance and authority as having political and legal power to obligate the Irish state to enact laws of equality, thus perceived positively. Conversely, the EU is also stated to be an undemocratic entity. The final section expands on perceptions of the Irish economy within the more globalized macro structure of financial capitalism.

9.1 Perceived benefits and flaws of the Irish welfare state

Beyond the benefit of being a legally recognised citizen of the nation state of Ireland and the ability to then travel with an Irish passport (as discussed in the previous chapter), are benefits associated with the provisions of the Irish welfare state. Within the Naas focus group discussion what may be evidence of a realization, or at least what may have been brought to the fore of the participants' consciousness, from viewing the multimedia presentation, relates to openly distinguishing the perceived benefits from what is deemed the Irish social welfare state model. This is explicated in the response provided by participant Liam who appears to describe an additional outlook from what they had said prior to viewing the presentation. Liam directly refers to comments made in the multimedia discussion primarily in relation to education.

Liam I suppose in ways we don't realize how lucky we are, I mean in Ireland, I mean I know we complain a lot but Irish people moan an awful lot… but overall we are extremely lucky with what we have like… I mean, we have decent, we have a good education, we like, hospitals they're good I mean, compare that to other countries like, it is no surprise that some people want to become Irish… it's a pretty nice place

Colin There's a good em, you know, they take care of people who aren't well off, I mean a lot, then do a lot of other countries, like America and things, I mean it's awful to be poor in America, but there is, even though some people don't think of it like that, but when we compare, how we take care of the poor, the hungry and things in Ireland… the poor weren't hit as bad as they were in America by the recession here because of, there's a, you know there's a big social safety net here

Liam We have more opportunities too then a lot of people would have, like I know people say America land of… opportunity, but I mean -

Glenn It doesn't really work

Liam You have to be, it depends like… their colleges cost an awful lot of money, like I know, our colleges do cost money but not half as much as like Harvard or… anything like that but (slight pause), you know, for being Irish there are a lot of benefits that go with it so like (slight pause), I was going to make a good point there and now I've forgot…

YB Well coming back to what you had said, you know, where it is not surprising that people would want to become Irish or come to Ireland, and you know in relation to opportunity and benefits, do you see that as being a good thing, or… do you think that access to benefits should be restricted or feel that it is a good thing to share the benefits, the wealth of the country, or, if we can consider them wealth?

Liam I wouldn't say that we should, like, let's say if any, if someone comes to the country, let's say ok, you don't get all of the benefits of being Irish, you only get some of them and the rest are kept for the Irish cos that's, that wouldn't be fair on people…that's just, but -

YB So like, a partial access to benefits… wouldn't be fair?

Liam Well because I mean (pause), it would just be kind of like shutting people off, if someone wants to come to Ireland… wants to take part in the society and wants to become part of the culture… then, they should

The discussion exhibited above and input primarily from Liam, seem to highlight the apparent difference between Irish societal structuring when compared with the United States of America. For the participants, apparently there is the tendency to make comparative analyses based on assumed differences between the Irish nation state and the United States of America welfare model. Not only is Liam's addition to the

discussion in parallel with the contribution from the first interviewee, Laura, it seems to go further progressively by explicitly declaring that state benefits and provisions should be afforded to both nationals and non-nationals living within Irish society.

Colin If you're going to sit around and do nothing then no matter where you are from or who you are, whether you are Irish or not, you're going to sit around and do nothing, you… it's a bit unfair to the people that are really poor and really don't have anything, if you're one I, I unfortunately know some people that waste their lives away on drugs and smoking and, you know, they half the time don't show up to school, things like that and… the way they are right now they're destined for a life on social benefits and not doing anything or you know, living off of other people, but you know those kind of people don't, I feel they don't deserve it

Liam There are some people, like let's say you take some people who are Irish, Irish, who you know are one hundred percent Irish… some of them don't take part in the community, they don't really have any pride in Irishness, when my little sister does Irish dancing and she goes to the 'Worlds' to compete and it's generally in different places in Ireland and tonnes of different countries, like Americans, I think this year there was -

Colin There was lots of English people too

Liam Yeah, I mean and they love the culture, they love the music, they love the dancing… and if they, they have shown interest in it, they want to be part of the culture but they aren't what you would call one hundred percent Irish… so, saying Irish people like, back to the partial thing, you, some people who have more respect for the culture and show more interest in the culture… then

some people who are meant to be Irish, meant to be their culture

Significant aspects, detailed in the continuation of conversation above, include a shared opinion by both Colin and Liam which evidently criticize people deemed and recognised to be full members of Irish society. The disparagement would seem based on perceiving some members as not possessing the desire to participate in community life. This social nonparticipation and lack of communal involvement would appear to be equated to a lack of pride in Irish society, which in turn gives the participants justification to claim that some members are underserving of the provisions of the welfare state. Linking such conceptions to discussion on access to state resources and welfare to the 'non-Irish' from a normative perspective of fairness may have some justification; however, it also acts to subtly feed into critique of the welfare state and an attitude of "us" against "them". It would also seem to complement Anderson's (2013: 2*ff.*) central argument and description of the community of value, where 'modern states portray themselves not as arbitrary collections of people hung together by a common legal status but as a community of value, composed of people who share common ideals and (exemplary) patterns of behaviour expressed through ethnicity, religion, culture, or language—that is, its members have shared values.'

Implied from the discussion above is the importance of the extrinsic relationship to the country irrespective of the person's subscribed or ascribed citizenship affiliation. In contrast, the other implication from above, is the viewpoint that both participants seem to impose the maintenance of a dominant cultural normative position. It would seem an expression of interest in Irish culture would suffice to deem one satisfactorily entitled to state welfare provisions, yet the participants do not acknowledge the bind this leads to when envisaging a more ethno-pluralist society.

In the Drogheda focus group discussion, the opening response to the notion that being born in Ireland is an essential criterion for being 'Irish', the impression is that Diarmuid rejects birthright citizenship as an essential criterion, which is warranted on the basis of reciprocity between rights and responsibilities.

Diarmuid I don't think being born in Ireland or being of Irish descent is essential criteria for being Irish but what I believe is, (pause) to live in a free country and obey the

> law, and with rights comes responsibility, I'm a firm believer that we don't just get rights, (slight pause) automatically given, we have responsibilities, we have duties, I was in the defence forces for twenty years, and I, before that I was in the part time reserve forces and I swore an oath of loyalty to the constitution of Ireland, so I'm well aware of what my patriotic duty is, it's my loyalty to the constitution of Ireland, (slight pause) that's how I regard myself as an Irishman

This response encapsulates several themes of analysis together. For instance, it would seem to refer to the notion of freedom and how such autonomy is conversely bound to being lawful. As in other focus group conversations and also affirmed by the second interviewee, Dijwar, conforming to the notion of a law abiding citizen seems paramount to living freely and assuredly within a democracy. As above, this perspective also corresponds with the ideal notion of the *community of value* (Anderson, 2013). As Anderson (2013: 3) describes 'the community of value is populated by "good citizens", law abiding and hard-working members of stable and respectable families.' Conversely implied is that the individual recognized as a free citizen should not challenge the law or should do so perhaps only by seeking changes to the law through democratic processes. Directly associated with this idealized lawful citizen is then the access to rights such as state welfare provisions, in direct juxtaposition with the notion of being a citizen responsible to the nation state. Again this duality of rights and responsibilities seems to replicate comments made by the forth interviewee, Kevin. Tantamount to being a dutiful citizen are the virtues of loyalty and patriotism. Thus, evidently for Diarmuid, to claim *Irishness* does not require bloodline nor birthright citizenship but instead quintessentially demands the possession of the virtues of loyalty and patriotism specific to the constitution of Ireland.

Within the Clondalkin focus group discussion, the participants respond after viewing the presentation by discerning and accentuating the comments made by the first interviewee, Laura, on education and medical services provided by the state through welfare.

Kelsey I know the first girl said she got free education and free healthcare, I was like "what Ireland are you living in?"…

Christine She kind a caught herself… it's the principle of it rather, it's not free… but it is freer than some countries

Kelsey Well yeah… it's considerably cheaper than America… and access for other countries, but it's not free

Christine No, it's not free, no

Brady No she probably did get free healthcare (pause)

Kelsey Medicard, yeah… maybe, medication -

Brady I think in some cases you can get free medication"

Christine But how free is free? ...

Cillian But yeah, what's your definition?

Brady Well, it depends on your situation

Christine Yeah, that's true

Cillian Yeah, are they financial backing?

YB But is it not interesting that she highlights that as being… a real benefit to being Irish? (slight pause)

Kelsey Well I know like in college like a lot of people would come over to Ireland… to study 'cos it's like a fraction of the price… in Ireland

Christine Even as an overseas (student)

Dana Yeah it's expensive

Brady I wouldn't say, is that more a benefit of being Irish, that's a benefit of being a refugee?

Kelsey Yeah

Brady 'Cos Irish people don't all get that

This extract initially exposes the opinion that some of the welfare provisions which are described as ostensibly free by the first interviewee, Laura, are contrariwise perceived by Kelsey as not free, in the financial sense of the term. The notion of 'free' is questioned more generally, both in the sense that there can be a direct cost or that it is paid for through taxation and more generalized reciprocity. Of significance is that the conversation also would seem to reveal a sense of resentment towards 'outsiders', either as 'outsiders' coming to study at a reduced cost than the burden they would have to pay in their respective countries or as 'outsiders' recognised as refugees. The portrayed perception would appear to be that refugees receive more benefits relative to Irish people with the connotation that this would seem unfair and biased. Of relevance to this, Moriarty (2005) documents how, 'key government officials, particularly the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, and media commentators have served to construct asylum seekers childbearing as being associated with crime, welfare abuse, exploitation, cultural dilution, economic pressure and a threat to Irish citizenship.' Thus, the participants' views may plausibly hint at the ways in which elites and media manipulation can and do shape and influence the opinions of the public

Similarly, within the Coolock focus group discussion, there is discussion and critique of the notion of "free" in relation to the input from the interviewee, Laura. This emerges within the discussion when participant Emmet initially responds with a post-viewing comment. However, more varied opinions are expressed in this focus group discussion, which seem to provide opposing views on the concept of 'free', particularly in relation to education.

Emmet I was intrigued by the youth, the first one, it was the last day as well, one of the first things that jumped out at me, was, her definition of free (slight pause) as in free education and free health, we wouldn't necessarily consider it to be free… she saw it as… the best thing about our citizenship I think… it gave her access to free education, free healthcare, now… I certainly wouldn't (say) that we have a free education system -

Peadar And sure, sure if her American cousins -

Emmet	Or free healthcare
Tierney	Well ok but -
Grainne	It's a lot more free than
Peadar	Have spent thousands and thousands of dollars
Tierney	No let's tease that one out like, well like, primary school is free… no fees there
Peadar	…well it's not actually, if you think of the extra fees and monies you have to pay, you know, there's always extras, there's art and there's this and that
Tierney	Well you have to buy books and
Grainne	You can go through it free
Tierney	Yeah
Peadar	Oh no, no, no, no
Tierney	But it is free
Peadar	I mean -
Emmet	You can go through it free, but there's a small minority going through the whole schooling system from -
Peadar	If you go to third level education in the states it would probably cost you thirty grand a year…
Emmet	Yes, absolutely
Grainne	Yeah

As the conversation progresses to debate the notion of "free", Grainne seems to attempt to clarify the interpretation made by the first interviewee, Laura by describing, "…I think when she says 'free' I think she understands that it's not totally free, but it's free as in the access…". However, it is only after some debate that acknowledgement appears to be is made of the generalized reciprocity associated with welfare provisions. An example of this is when Aileen evidently claims in relation to

education, "and o' course we pay for it through our taxes". The discussion continues to contemplate how people conceptualize the welfare state model, prior to recognising the fundamental value and significance of such a system.

Emmet It's a perspective thing and I suppose that comes back to, (slight pause) the question of Irishness, is our perspective as Irish people different to that girl's perspective…?

Tierney She was born in Dublin… she knows the story yeah

Keela I think we're just more encouraged and we have more choice… [that] might be a better way of putting it you know… like there are options, if you want to do something, where a lot of countries, those people were from, you know, it's a lot more restricted and… they're not encouraged… particularly the women you know

Aileen And maybe people from outside can see and value things that we might take for granted as well… 'cos she might've been looking and saying "well if you were there you'd have to pay that", where we sort of feel… you know, we get it so we don't [know] -

Tierney We can't see the wolf

Aileen What it would be like not to have it like, you know… we don't see what it would be like… [to] be grownup and not be able to go to school, and when you see children abroad, especially in Africa and developing nations, how eager they are to go to school… and then you see our kids, "oh I have a pain in my tummy, oh I've a cold"

Within the extract above, participants would appear to compare benefits attained through the Irish welfare state model with other countries that may not have a well-developed welfare model structure. Not only is comparison seemingly made between differing modes of state governance amongst 'developed' nation states, Keela also

appears to make reference to the economic and cultural conditions in developing world economies that impact on educational attainment. The overall implication is that, as is subsequently stated by Aileen in reference to the comments made by the first interviewee, Laura, irrespective of a person's birth, the Irish may take the provisions of the welfare state model for granted.

The empathetic recognition of the circumstance of 'others', that may be in less fortunate situations due to their social structures, and/or societal economic predicament, is a rarity amongst the focus group discussions. Although at times responses appear to take a less egocentric form, they do not make a further advancement by considering issues in more altruistic terms. It is surprising that there would seem to be is an absence of altruistic expressions or that they do not evolve at this stage or later in the discussion when it might seem to have relevance during discussion of 'the other'. In fact, instead of identifying the positive value 'newcomers' might contribute, not just economically but also through their perspectives of social functioning, such socio-cultural capital seems reasoned as best attained through the process of returnee migration. This is expressed when participant Peadar acknowledges, "…I think there's no question about it, that when you travel em, and experience other cultures and other experiences, you do have a different perspective".

There is a sense of pride and independence in being able to claim that the social functioning of Irish welfare state orientation is superior to other nation states, such as Britain or America, as well as developing world nations. However, a major caveat would appear to be the concern that it is also a system being abused by its beneficiaries. Although there are more liberal egalitarian perspectives expressed amongst most of the participants in the Coolock discussion, dissatisfaction is projected towards mismanagement of state policies and practices, as well as criticism of values, attitudes and behaviours of citizens potentially misusing the system.

Peadar …historically, there's an issue I feel very, very strongly, is that (slight laughter) we go, look back the biggest problem that ever caused, that ever happened in this country was in the seventy-seven election, when rates were taken, and we, we, we developed this hand out culture… there's nothing for nothing in this world you

know, but there's an attitude of many Irish people now, that they expect things for nothing… that is a new experience, I think in Ireland because, if you, if you go to other cultures… that doesn't exist

Tierney I think there's a demographic attached to that expectation, to be honest with you…certain demographics that expect everything for nothing, like for example, my wife works in a post office in [Dublin suburb name] and she's dealing with three generations of a family who've never worked… their expectation is never to work… they live on welfare… that's it, work is sort of… something for somebody else… and it's bred into them, and I think the expectation of hand-outs, I would say… it's definitely a demographic area, eh, geographical, call it what you want… I don't expect, hand-outs…I'm, I, as a human, as an Irish person, I don't... but I know, I know other people who do

Aileen Well I think that there's a lot of people, and there'd be a, a few demographics where people expect that they have an entitlement… and you could say that very about people in the country who are extremely wealthy, take [wealthy family dynasty name] for example… like the, (slight pause) [name of wealthy family dynasty patriarch] himself did a lot of work but his children just expected that they had a right… to huge wealth, which they actually didn't have a right to wealth, that they felt that they should have a right to, and I think that, you know across the board, you can find that in a… fair few different situations, where people have an entitlement whether they're getting it off the state, whether they're refusing to pay taxes, or whatever you know…

To some extent, this excerpt exemplifies two opposing views concerning the misappropriation of Irish welfare state provisions. Initially Tierney seems to describe certain cohorts within the Irish population through anecdotal evidence that suggests specific groups are exploiting benefits. As is implied, because individuals from such groups are trapped in a cycle of intergenerational unemployment, such groups would seem associated with the lowest socio-economic strata of Irish society. However, as a counterargument Aileen appears to interject by emphasizing how subjects from elite spheres in Irish society also look to defraud the state by manipulating the Irish revenue and taxation system.

Within the conversation from the Clondalkin focus group discussion the notion of the Irish welfare state appears to be described as imperfect by Christine. This is revealed with the progression of the discussion on access to education and educational attainment.

Christine I think it's a flawed welfare state… I like the principles of it… but I think it needs tightening up… and it's being abused by (slight pause) all sectors of society and manipulated by policies and stuff, but I do think yeah… basic, ah I don't know what the baseline is on health in welfare, in medical, in education, but I do think there are abuses to the system but I would be kind of going more towards a welfare state than privatized

Kelsey I think we would be more welfare than privatized at the same time like we could be, it's not like, very welfare, like (slight laughter)… I suppose, like we're not speeding (slight laughter), like we haven't got, like we still pay our GP and we've got like, it's very expensive like, a medical care centre compared to like England, our education might be cheaper…

Christine I think some sectors pay a price for the general welfare system, it's not equal, equitable kind a system in terms of just because you're working and stuff… doesn't mean you've any access to anything, you're sort of

supplementing an awful lot to keep that welfare state at a baseline level for other people as well

The subsequent extract would seem to somewhat recognise the complicity of both sectors within the general public and the state itself, in the utilization of state provisions. It implies that state welfare provisions are not only being misappropriated, but also, that the policies themselves are knowingly constructed so as to benefit certain sectors more than others in a prejudicial manner. This, along with discussion on educational attainment, is analogous to the Bourdieusian notion of *cultural capital*, which favours those with familiarity of the dominant culture in society (Bourdieu, 1986; Sullivan, 2001)

While discussing if having Irish descent is an essential criterion for being 'Irish', or not, the conversation digresses by talking about a stereotypical situation of being abroad and identifying (with) fellow Irish because one can "spot the physical similarities" (Christine). However, the conversation reverts to drawing conclusions from the perceptions of both interviewee, Laura and Niamh in a comparative manner beyond their physiological appearances. The suggestion is that the contributions from both interviewees are perceived to be quite complementary of one another.

Christine It wasn't even so much for the physical thing, it was more the values seemed to be quite similar… I heard family, I heard safety, safe passage, education so there's sort of to me fundamentals of again basic rights and entitlements and that's kind of what it means to be Irish as well you know, and not that, I don't think they're level across the playing field but… I think, we kind of, sort of aspire to them, we have to manipulate for them for some people as well, 'cos they're not getting them… but there's a certain thing there that I would see as an Irish aspiration or something

The submission being made by Christine would seem to be that people will bend rules or find ways to circumnavigate restrictions in order to access certain welfare provisions, but that such behaviour may be, to an extent, condonable as it would be a way for such members of the public to fulfil their aspirations of obtaining their "basic

rights and entitlements" (Christine). Christine's perception implies that it is the structural flaws in the provisions of welfare that excuse values, attitudes and behaviours that would typically be deemed corrupt.

From a more detached and impartial position a similar dichotomous comparison between the deserving "us" versus the less or potentially underserving "them" is also presented within the Drogheda discussion. Evidently, Machie makes the reflection through anecdotal reference to the situation in Calais which reveals a perceived pragmatic relationship between the sought acquisition of national identity and the welfare state model.

> **Machie** You know and the… system there, my brother in law was talking about the identity problem, if any of those people are not sitting there, are they any worse off than myself?... but if any of those people were to enter the society and become part of the society, their children become French citizens, you know that's, that's the identity problem that… people have a problem with like, "oh you're coming in… and they're gonna get the same benefits" as others… who have been here fifteen years or hundreds of years, and at the end of the day, he's gonna, you know disappear, whenever they feel like it… that's not the way to go forward, if you want to do it properly, you come into society… (make) roots… and then be part of us or part of society, not just… take what you want…

The implication from Machie's remarks seems that in acquiring citizenship and being able to identify as a specific nationality, in this case French nationality, it then affords the once 'outsider' the ability to avail of the rights and provisions of the welfare state. Reservation would appear to be made towards the 'outsider' who, in becoming 'insider', is thus equally able to gain the same benefits as previously recognised 'insiders'. As implied above, the more 'authentic insider' however, should presumably have greater entitlement to such provisions through the process of generalized reciprocity.

In the previous chapter, an exchange of views within the Coolock focus group discussion is documented in relation to who is entitled to be an 'Irish' citizen. Conlaoch's views of citizenship seem unique in the context of responses from both the participants in the same focus group, as well as in the other focus group discussions. However, the rebuttal provided by Tierney and the subsequent counter response are also of importance in relation to notions of the welfare state governance. The conversation continues on, primarily from the perspective of Tierney through the analogous account that is provided in describing the neighbour down the street.

Tierney I'm going to use an analogy, I'm living in a housing estate right… (slight pause) and let's say there's forty-five different families in it… right, and we're all doing different things, I'm going out to do this, I'm living my life the way I want to do it and I'm, I'm married and… buying a house, I'm… doing my stuff, I'm looking after my kids and I'm doing, I'm doing everything reasonable right… and there are other houses around the way which (slight pause) most of them are doing the right things and some of them are not… but the guy who was living down in, in that house down there decides, "you know what it is, it's really chaotic where I live here, you know and… I'm suffering, (slight pause) it's not working out the way I want it to, and (slight pause) my standard of living is not really… the way I think it should be, do you know what I think I'm gonna do? I'm gonna go up to Tierney's [and surname] door, and I'm gonna say, I wanna come in and live in your house', (slight pause)… and I say "what?"… I says, "sorry, no, this is my house, I have certain situations going on here… which I'm in control of", and this that and the other… that's the analogy I use

Conlaoch Yeah, no, that's fine for your house because you won that house, in theory, you are -

Keela In your castle

Tierney I've, I've done my, I have my little space on planet earth -

Conlaoch No but you see -

Tierney Forget about it being a house, it's my little space on planet earth, where everything is in control, where I am the leader of the family… my children are being fed and watered and all of that but there's another guy down the way and (slight pause), eh, ok, you have to be charitable I suppose, maybe one of the children of that house… is having a problem, then that's a different story, do I take them in and say, I look after them and then… when things are sure, foster them and then, and then move it on to something else, but I don't think -

Conlaoch But I, but eh, the notion, the notion that -

Tierney Citizenship is there, I did go a bit

Conlaoch That you're espousing is that… that you own the land and that, that collectively the citizens of, of this state

Tierney Forget about me owning the land

Conlaoch Own the land

Tierney I'm running the land

Conlaoch Yes, that's the same -

Tierney I'm running and I'm living on it -

Conlaoch But they don't -

Tierney And I'm living by a decent set of, (slight pause) traditions

Conlaoch The land, the land actually owns us, and we serve the land

Tierney Ok, well that's my answer anyway

This exchange primarily between Tierney and Conlaoch portrays two outspokenly opposing views that can be related to the concept of property and private ownership. Conlaoch seems to perturb the sense of control, ownership, maintenance and dominance of space as described by Tierney, by inverting the position and stating that "the land actually owns us" (Conlaoch) humans. Such a position would seem to better supplement the critique of the social sciences for its 'inherent nation-state bias, or "methodological nationalism"' (Fossum, 2012: 341).[76] In contrast Tierney's hu/man dominant position exposes how bound within anthropocentrism is the creation of divisions along national, racial and ethnic lines.

The analogous description provided by Tierney seems quite one-dimensional in its account and does not reflect on the complexities of migration. Tierney's position seems equivalent to what are described as 'traditional conceptualizations of the state' (Brown, 2011: 54), which are reliant on insular policies and statist defences to protect culture, nationality and national patriotism. In particular it appears to be referring specifically to migration of asylum seekers and refugees. It may however, capture a sentiment that is prevalent more broadly within Irish society. The analogy creates a clear differentiation between those that are within the family and those that are external to it. Furthermore by reducing it in such a simplistic manner, the implication is that it neglects consideration of more collectivized mechanisms which occur placing someone or a group of people in the predicament that would necessitate them to feel the requirement to leave and seek refuge elsewhere. Evidently, there is an assumption of responsibility on the individual who is victim for the difficulty they may face. There is also a lack of recognition of the power of societal order that may impinge on a person's quality of life, security and safety. It would seem to exemplify the paradoxical condition of neoliberalism that on the one hand shifts onus of responsibility onto the individual while diminishing rights by maintaining state interest and investment in oppressive apparatuses of control, policing and security, as described by Goldberg (2009: 333).

The analogy itself would seem conflicted. Family would appear to be equated to one closed society and relied upon to justify group inclusion, whereas, exclusion would

[76] As Beck (2003: 454) has stressed, 'To some extent, much of the social sciences is a prisoner of the nation-state.'

seem to be achieved on the basis of the individuals' circumstance without consideration that the group or family may impose, or had historically imposed, sanctions on the alternative society or its individuals. Thus, the seeming implication is that in the same instance, there is the recognition of "family" dominance, or collectivized organization that transcends the individual for the 'insider', while conversely the omission of family dominance of the 'outsider'.

9.2 Conservatism and *Irishness*

Within several of the focus group discussions there is recognition of the shift from the structure of a welfare state to a more neo-liberalist state. In some participants' remarks this seems to be seen as a beneficial transition, in others' as having a negative impact, or in others' as an unavoidable inevitability. Common across all three positions is the sense of processual change in governance and social organization and with this, subtle concern that traditional or past forms of state organization are being undermined or eroded.

An example that links this change in governmental structure, away from a more traditional welfare state model towards more neo-liberal governmentality would appear to be expressed in the Drumcondra focus group discussion. Moreover, an underlying perceived outcome of such societal change may reveal a more reflective and thoughtful consideration of the impending consequences. This seems to materialize in a post viewing comment, when Ciara discusses the remarks made by the first interviewee Laura, who compares fees and access to education in the United States of America with the Irish context.

> **Ciara** …I'm not sure if it was the same woman but she was talking about education and free education and how much freedom that gave, and I thought that was interesting where her cousin who was the same age as her in America… he would have to go into a private company in order to pay back his loans, I just didn't realize the freedom that that would give a person to choose work in the voluntary sector or maybe a sector that wasn't as well paid

YB	The outcomes of that…
Ciara	You get far more choice, exactly it was opened up to her rather than have to pay back this huge loan… it is a huge thing, I think
Eddie	Oh, absolutely, I mean the university education… in the States, I mean you are talking about forty five thousand dollars or that kind of money… em, you know for starter
Carroll	… and as people would say, well that's the point of it, is to keep people… like if you read some of this stuff, it's about control… and about keeping the status quo, so you are educated in this way… so that you will fit in with society in that way… you know, you're gonna keep on in the corporate thing… and if it… Chomsky's written a lot about it, Chomsky's written a lot about it

This exchange and interaction in conversation between participants Carroll and Ciara seems to reveal an interpretation of a reversion towards access to education being based on economic status or the nation state being in economic debt. The impression is that such a policy is seen as having a detrimental impact on affording individuals certain freedoms. This is understood to be the case for many in the United States of America. There would seem to be an assumed link between what may be interpreted as a shift from welfare state based provisions in education to a more neo-liberalist approach, restricting freedoms and similarly, the reinforcement of status quo positions that are attained through such control. Implied is that the incremental retrenchment of the Irish social welfare state may be evolving into a government system based on neo-liberal ideology.

What is also illuminated from this short interchange is the absence of involvement from the other male participants present. It may be observed that the other participants generally express more conservative positions throughout the Drumcondra focus group discussion and that they are personally more accepting and sympathetic of the shift towards a more neo-liberal form of governance.

Within the Belfast focus group discussion, it is apparent that there is a clear consensus opinion which views *Irishness* as being characterized by values of conservatism. The participants portray an enthusiasm and awareness of political activism which underscores their professional lives and interests, as documented in earlier conversation excerpts. In detailing characteristics of *Irishness*, two forms of conservatism would seem to be identified and defined.

Tony Well it's one of the most conservative countries in Europe… moral conservative

Reagan Moral conservatism yeah, anti-abortion and anti-gay and yeah

Molly Which all feeds into religiosity I suppose

Tony Although that's probably changing isn't it?

Molly Not completely…

Tony There is a bigger minority of, you know, people who are more open to different identities, you know, and women's rights and LGBT rights, but it's still small compared to other parts of Western Europe

Molly And I suppose em, racism, in terms of you know Irish -

Tony Oh yeah, very racist -

Molly As an Irish culture, in terms of a hierarchy of culture, we think we are top of the tree, you know it's great to be Irish and -

Tony As long as you're white

Molly Yeah, and everybody wants to be Irish

Tony As long as you're white, you can't really be Irish if you are not white… I think Ireland was the most homogenous countries up until the late 90s, in terms of statistics, in terms of you know whites, Christian, you know Ireland and Lithuania or someone… then again we did have one of the largest fascist movements up

	until the nineteen-thirties, that is why it's hardly surprising, (pause) what else is *Irishness*? our political conservatism, not just our moral conservatism, Ireland is politically conservative and has been since partition and not before it
Molly	Yeah
Tony	I mean, the fact that our labour party, which is, well the Irish labour party, which is what I am talking about… it's never been Marxist, it's always been social democrat, well weak socially democrat and the rest of the country is very politically conservative, Fianna Fail, Fine Gael… I think right wing policy, quite a lot of class prejudice, hatred of inner city Dubliners, you know from the political elites… despised them really, and that continues today you know, yeah it's pretty shit really isn't it? when you think about *Irishness*

Within this extract both moral conservatism and political conservativism are discussed in a critical manner by the participants. The excerpt appears to provide quite an opinionated understanding of Irish conservatism and within a relatively short frame contemplates issues (highlighted in previous chapters) pertaining to religion, racism, homogeneity, desire to be Irish and understandings of the context of modern history and the emergence of the Irish nation state republic. The concluding dimension, critiquing class prejudice, is revealing as it would seem to suggest that the existent status quo functions within an ideological framework of democratic and egalitarian republican values, yet maintains contempt for the urban working class. *Irishness* would seem to be viewed as the adoption of a value system that can simultaneously accommodate conservatism, yet purports to uphold notions of equality. The participant refers to such a value system as "neoliberalism" (Tony). However, such a generalized orientation within Irish society would also seem to be blurred with conservative and neo-conservative principles.

At a later stage within the same focus group discussion, Tony, reflects on how someone can become 'Irish' by stating, "…Ireland is not different to most other

European countries, it's just completely racist, conservative and -". In the context of how someone can become 'Irish', inferred is that Tony not only views the Irish as racist but that the Irish state is racist. This opinion would seem supportive of the view of Ireland fitting into the notion of the racial state (Goldberg, 2002; Lentin and McVeigh, 2006; Lentin, 2007). The remark by Tony directly contradicts the viewpoint previously stated contrasting other European countries as being generally more progressive than Ireland, so there is also a level of inconsistency when comparing Irish governance with European governance. This may be dependent on when looked at from a Eurocentric point of view or the opposite. Both stances substantiate and are analogous to what Benhabib (2004: 13) describes as the predicament facing the EU where it is caught in a contradiction between legislating norms of cosmopolitan justice within the EU and maintaining outmoded conceptions of sovereignty to restrict those outside the EU.

The dominant role the Catholic institution played, and in many ways still plays, in shaping the cultural norms adopted by the Irish population is alluded to, as well as its influence in the governance of the Irish state prior to and since its founding. Although there appears to be the common view that this has changed in recent times, what is of importance is not only its influential position in affecting state policy but also its direct role in administering provisions in what would ordinarily be the primary responsibility of the nation state. Within the focus group discussion, participant Ryan seemingly recognises that the Irish state would have been a Catholic country however, "now that's changed… but up to , you know, maybe ten years ago" (Ryan). When it is queried if it is still a characteristic of *Irishness* the conversation continues as follows.

Ryan	There's been a lot of changes but we're not talking about that, it's still Catholic
Eddie	…it has formed the Irish culture and the Irish character… there is no doubt
Ryan	Massive yeah
Carroll	It will stay, sure it's in the constitution
YB	In what way has it formed the Irish character?

Alana	Well the reality is that a lot of social activity was centred round the church, do-you-know
Ryan	Well I mean education as well, if you think of all the schools
Eddie	Education
Ryan	Provided by the Catholic Church, well the schools were run by, you know and, and a lot of hospitals and nursing… and all that kind of thing
Ciara	I think… a kind of dominant influence really, you know
Ryan	Absolutely, yeah, so there was a massive influence, if you think…
Eddie	It wasn't just run by, it was provided by…
Carroll	Well the state provided funding
Eddie	…I wouldn't've been educated, until the Christian Brothers came, the state didn't do much… to educate me
Ryan	So there was, I mean there's a huge, after I think, independence, the Catholic Church didn't roll over… in terms of running the country as educational, and medical… I mean, they really did, didn't they?
Carroll	Even social projects… do-you-know like, orphanages, children's homes and -
Ryan	So I think that's -
Eddie	It wasn't, kind a since the State, Edmund Rice, it was a long time… before the State was formed
Ryan	Well yeah… that's massive really (murmurs) for us, the Irish as a group… as a group nation

What is revealed from this extract seems to be the recognition of the absence of state run provision and in its place the governing role of the Catholic Church as an

institution in large sectors such as education, healthcare and 'care' institutions. Implied is that the Catholic Church was central to the foundational constitution of Irish society both legally and culturally, that it had a dominating power over the population and that it encompassed the public institutions providing services normally assumed by the state.

In effect, it could be interpreted that in some ways it is not a new phenomenon for governance and management of provisions in the Irish context to be outsourced as it has occurred historically with the institution of Catholicism. Thus, it is not surprising that privatization under the ethos of neoliberalism also manages to maintain a conservative leaning.

9.3 The nation state perpetuating migration controls and nationalism

Within the Belfast focus group discussion, the role of the nation state as a medium for control, particularly control of the movements of people, is not seen as waning but as of greater and valued importance within a structure of transnational capitalism.

> **Tony** Well I don't think nationalism's, there's a big myth that, a big globalization, neo-liberal myth that national borders are less important, that free movement of labour, a break-down of national identities, we'll all be traversing around the globe as… entrepreneurs just enjoying ourselves with our ipods and that bullshit and that's what tells people… and that will not disappear because, well international capitalism needs them to, to control laws to control local parliament so, they can go and exploit the removal of resources for their own benefit… the only people who are choosing to be national, you know, international travellers, there's a very small elite group of f*** capitalists, the rest of us are going to be down at the bottom scrambling for the scraps at the top of the table, fighting amongst each other for them, I mean it suits them, and they'll

encourage that, as they do in Kiev, you know, and places like that

YB But you are kind of suggesting then that, nation states will be used as -

Tony Well they are already, I think -

YB Are being used as tools to enforce laws or controls on the people

Tony Yeah, on behalf of the implementation of capitalism… that's where you need nation states, you can't do without them, 'cos those territories will remain, national border will, so will all the negative associations of identity and national identity and all the rest of it you know, and when they need to they'll play one off against the other, as you're seeing in Ukraine at the moment, aren't you? what is really about economics is now ethnic Russians versus f*** ethnic Ukrainians you know, nothing to do with that but, (pause)

YB …could we challenge that setup by a re-imagination of identity do you think? I mean, there's a parallel… I think it's completely correct but, I'm trying to look at it less from… a movement of production, of a movement of goods and looking at it from the control or mobility of people (pause)

Tony It depends on how it is… there is this idea that I am comfortable with, which is mobility is a free choice

Tony seems to interpret the importance of nation state governance as being one which operates in a functional capacity, such as managing the mechanisms of control over the movements of people. These mechanisms are at the behest of capitalist advancements rather than necessarily the good of the populace. This relates back to previous comments which compare European governance and Irish governance within the Belfast focus group discussion, whereby the mass movements of populations, certainly within the European Union are seen as shifts of transient migration.

Although ostensibly considered as "free" movement they are described as being governed by the demands of capitalism and regional economic fluctuations. This perspective would seem to challenge the idealized patriotic cosmopolitan view as described by Appiah (1997: 618) where flows of migration could be celebrated, if determined by the free decisions of individuals or of groups. Instead it quite fittingly would appear to complement Goldberg's (2009: 152) description whereby

> now relatively undeterred and deregulated flows and mixture have been germane to promoting globalized neoliberal commerce. Within the European theater they have been helped along, if unevenly, by more or less resonant informal social intercourse across racial lines. But the promotion of a racially muted sociality within has been supplemented by a more forceful if sometimes symbolic cementing of racially circumscribed border barricades around "fortress Europe" at its geographical limits.

Tony describes how, "they're not backpackers, trying to backpack around Europe, they're people who have been wrenched out of their own cultures, forced to go somewhere else, to work in shitty, low paid work, abused by racists while they're there and then, they have to go somewhere else with the next boom, 'cos that boom is over".

This section focuses primarily on views and perceptions of immigration. Discussion below highlights the concern expressed by Sassen (2005: 37) who states, 'What is now experienced as a crisis in the state's control over its borders may well be the sign that we need to redraw the map within which we confront the difficult question of how to regulate and govern immigration flows in an increasingly interdependent world.' Within the Belfast focus group discussion, the discussion on immigration control seems to focus on the differentiated control systems for people within the European Union juxtaposed against people that are outside the European Union. Explicitly bound to such control regimes is the legislative condition determining who is officially deemed to be a member of the Irish or European collective and of equal important for governance controls, who is excluded. When asked specifically about the outcomes of the 2004 ICR, several participants from the Belfast discussion appear to show a definitive and expressed understanding of the consequences in quite explicit terms. The response brings to the fore several intertwined issues.

Tony Well I'm not sure to be perfectly honest, I know we had a racist referendum

Molly The outcome is where, just because a child is… born in Ireland, (it) did not automatically guarantee them Irish citizenship, so then they have to go through an application

Tony There was a change in the constitution, wasn't it?... yeah, there was a change, a constitutional change… Ireland only, well yeah, (pause) it was racist

Molly It is racist

Tony Purely racist, the whole impetus behind it was racist, it was small minded, it was national chauvinistic… yeah it was f***… to do with this place… it was embarrassing too internationally; it was one of the first times that Ireland on an international stage in Europe showed its true colours, since the blue shirts in the thirties… it showed what it is really like, you know

Reagan I don't really know about -

Tony If you were born in Ireland before the referendum you're Irish…

Molly Listen, my mate… [friend's name], his partner is South African so the first kid was born before two thousand and four and became an automatic citizen, the second child was born, they had to apply for citizenship for their second child because… he's from Ireland, she's from South Africa… and that was the change to the Irish constitution

YB It was a fundamental shift away from, being born, your link to the land of the country rather than the link to… descent

Tony The impacts were very controversial, the very idea that before, when that constitution was written, no one envisaged mass, well they should've, but they didn't envisage mass movements of populations potentially… not mass movements, but immigration, that was a response to say 'well we're part of the European Union' which implies open borders, but you know, anyone outside those open borders, particularly non-EU nationals, you've got to ask special permission, you know… and of course the people that are asked are people that are from North Africa or Africa, or sub-Saharan Africa, or you know, the far-east, so people of colour, so they would argue it was coincidentally racist… whereas we know it wasn't

This excerpt combines an interpretation of the changes of the 2004 ICR as racist and nationally chauvinistic with an anecdotal account grounded in personal experience of a close acquaintance of participant Molly. Tony crucially also discusses the perceived rationale for such an amendment and implies that it is falsely based on uncontrollable levels of mass immigration. By highlighting in the concluding statement that the amendment is racist because of its exclusion of people of colour primarily, Tony would seem to be affirming the 'race'-based materialization of an "us" versus "them" dichotomy (as discussed in the previous section) imbedded within the supreme level of Irish nation state legislation.

Charlie seems to express the justification for the amendments made in the 2004 Irish Citizenship referendum, within the Limerick focus group discussion. However, the impression is that modern trends in mobility, migration and processes associated with globalization are provided as rationalizations necessitating such legislative revisions (this would seem to complement discussion below on rational pragmatism/opportunism).

Charlie …I would assume that the law was changed because of the movement throughout the planet of people either

through… persecution… and whatever, that laws had to be modernized to take account of that

Juliana Yeah, because there's a culture of people from non-European states, getting in anywhere in Europe… having babies

Charlie And therefore if you get in Europe, then you've free access to Ireland…

Maebh Yes

Juliana Ireland, that's right

Charlie You know, in theory, because I suppose I'm not treating this… as something sort of, but yea-know, we have this preconceived idea that people, and I can understand it, cannot freely travel… it's like nearly when the… you know… moving from grazing to say you can't cross over a border, now that's simplified but with the, remember with the, taking flights before Osama BinLaden, it was envisaged you could turn up at an airport… and you could fly, the same as you hop on a train… and when Osama BinLaden… and the twin towers, stopped all of that… of course you have to have (pause), laws on immigration, migration, but generally I think most countries, I know here, most especially in the trades, most people gave out about the Polish, (pause) I thought it was about half a million at one stage, I don't remember

Juliana I'm not sure, exactly

Adrian The Polish

Charlie Yeah, and they were doomed, eh, people on the ground said that they were taking -

Juliana I don't think it was as much as that

Charlie A portion of Irish work… and there was the thing that they were working for cheaper… rates and you can understand that because I mean, people have to live… but a lot of it was judged on eh, most of it was the Polish and other nationalities took the work because the Irish workers wouldn't do it, and they definitely wouldn't do it for the… the pay that was involved, now subsequent to that, I mean, pay has dropped in this country, and with the luck of it, it's not a bad thing because I mean… ordering in a solicitor or some, an electrician in, it costs a lot of money, and, (pause) prices have to be controlled, you know…

Initially considered within this excerpt, is the plight of refugees and asylum seekers as a basis for the amendments introduced from the 2004 ICR. Consequently it is expressed that legislative changes were required in order to become more modernized, explicitly within the reorganization of Ireland as a member of the European Union and the increased mobility of persons between nation state members. There seems to be the perceived fear and threat of non-Europeans, entering Europe, reproducing (assumedly to improve chances for leave to remain) and then accessing Ireland with the legitimacy to stay. Although there appears to be a questioning of the control on free movement of people, Charlie's argument seems to move from directly discussing the non-European migrant 'other', to the perceived threat to security. It is at this stage that a perspective based on experience and anecdotal evidence is provided to discuss intra-European immigration. Exaggerated numbers of migrants, particularly from Poland are suggested to have immigrated into Ireland, and although participant Charlie creates distance from the opinion, the perceived sense is that the Irish begrudge 'newcomers' because they are seen to have taken Irish jobs. Charlie seems to view such resentment as unwarranted by suggesting that the Irish at the time wouldn't do the required work because of pay and work conditions. No basis is provided to support the initial claims than non-European migrants had exploited the ease of mobility within Europe in order to gain access and immigrate to Ireland.

On the one hand the opinion would seem to be that migration controls are justified to restrict non-European migrant 'others', without any substantive rationale behind it

besides prejudice. In contrast, freedom of movement as a generalized philosophy would appear to be acceptable as it accommodates new workers required to conduct jobs that would otherwise be avoided by the Irish themselves. To some degree participants' views would appear to support the notion that Ireland pursues competitive corporatist national interest as an endorsement of developmental modernity (O'Donovan, 2009: 103*f.*; Fanning, 2010: 410). However, the restriction of non-European migrant 'others' would seem to complicate the more benign notion of developmental modernity because such a condition may have only marginally, to what Fanning (2010: 410) suggests may be the case, 'undermined ethno-nationalist rules of belonging'. The evidence also would seem to support the *Ordo-liberal* perspective theorized in the second chapter. Furthermore, detailed above is indicative of opinion, which shifts from being supportive of exclusivity and contrarily supportive of inclusivity. Shifting opinion does not occur on the basis of perceived moral ideology, though it is framed within discourse based on ideology, instead it is based on a supposed rational pragmatism. This aspect or process of obscuring racism through the presentation of perceived rational pragmatisms is further detailed below.

9.4 Authority and perceived rational pragmatism in conversation

This section further exposes and elaborates on the juxtaposition of ir/rational pragmatisms, opportunism and moral dis/regard within inclinations towards neo-liberal thinking and political authority. Perceived rational pragmatisms are seen to substantiate a logical rationale of moral disregard and act to obscure racism. For instance, where morality and principles would reject racism because of its baseless and refuted logic, perceived rational pragmatisms offer the individual or collective a (falsely) construed pretext to conduct their actions or sanctions that are essentially racially biased. Such perceived rational pragmatism is in fact wholly irrational; nonetheless it provides the groundless basis for dominant advancement and preferment. In reality it is less pragmatic and more opportunistic in its composition. Perceived rational pragmatisms provide the socio-psychological basis for opportunistic behaviour with moral indifference. It thus complements the ideology of neoliberalism which drives such a self-perpetuating process of opportunism.

As exposed in the previous chapter, within the Limerick focus group discussion, differentiation between being an 'Irish' citizen and being '*truly* Irish' seems to be constructed by participants in a somewhat satirical way. However, the requirement of having Irish descent as an essential criterion for being 'Irish' is also discussed in quite a pragmatic sense in relation to acquiring citizenship and getting an Irish passport. When a similar question was asked previously in relation to who is entitled to be an 'Irish' citizen, the initial response appears to be definitive and direct.

Juliana People who… meet the criteria of the legislation

Charlie Yeah, I, I agree with that…

Dale If you're born in Ireland or if you're born in a different country to Irish parents, (pause)

Juliana Yeah, I don't personally have a problem with the Irish legislation, I don't fully understand it either… but I don't have issues with it, I don't… I've no issues with the legislation, so, I'm kind of, I wouldn't be too rigid in saying "two Irish parents… if you meet the criteria, like people have moved here… lived here for ten years and said, you know…"I wanna stay here"…

The impression is that although Juliana expresses an element of incomprehension, Juliana's response seems to reflect an unquestioning support of legislation as fixed and predetermined, thus somewhat beyond the influence of the public realm. Within this focus group there would seem to be a majority of opinion supportive of the legislation. Responses also suggest a weighted view towards the necessity for bloodline descent, or alternatively having spent an adequate temporal period within Ireland together with the conscious desire to reside in Ireland. Notable is the underlying determination of the responses which appear to resolutely support the legislation. Such may be a genuine opinion, but it may also reflect a more pragmatic attitude towards law and order and status quo.

Continuing on from this dimension of acceptance of legislative norms, within the Drumcondra focus group discussion, the aspect of perceived rational pragmatism would appear to materialize in the discussion. The participants provide a well-informed description of the outcomes of the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum.

Ciara	If the child is born in Ireland it's not automatically granted Irish citizenship… umm, ok, (pause)
Ryan	Well?
Ciara	That's all I know about it (slight laughter)
Carroll	I don't know about it
Ciara	If a child is born in Ireland they're not automatically -
Ryan	Not only that now
Eddie	They're not automatically
Ryan	(cough)
Carroll	…Ireland, is that the thing?
Eddie	Yep, unless I think… one of their parents is Irish… there was an automatic entitlement to citizenship once you were born in Ireland… but they removed that… that was the essential thing
Ryan	(There were) incidences where people were preparing for here eight months pregnant and having their child and a lot of black people are citizens
Eddie	I thought they were, they were one week off eh, giving birth, they were arriving at the Coombe hospital, you know
Carroll	That's dangerous
Eddie	And, and, it was terrible
Carroll	Sad
Ryan	It did happen, by the way
Eddie	It did happen, I know

This interchange and argument seems to provide the supporting rationale for the constitutional changes which are framed within the context of a perceived moral concern for the health and welfare of pregnant 'newcomers' arriving into the Irish state. Noteworthy is the apparent association made which contextualizes the

'newcomers' into a specific cohort that is racialized. Although since discredited (refer to chapter three), reference is made to dominant mass media reports on migrant influxes and their health and welfare conditions. Paradoxically Ryan seems to reaffirm knowledge and an awareness of such discrediting yet maintains the stigmatizing narrative nonetheless. When this stance is challenged by the facilitator, with both the supposed health conditions and exaggerated numbers of immigrants being refuted, the conversation evolves to position itself with an alternative justification in support of the legislative changes.

YB …people have done studies of newspaper cuttings…that were purporting…you know, this sudden influx…of Nigerian mothers with triplets and boarding planes… about to give birth, but… there's no evidence to suggest that that was actually the case (relative) to the numbers they were stating

Eddie No, they were suggesting there was huge amounts, which there wasn't

Ryan Well we didn't want the numbers to increase either…you know, so if you see something happening and…word goes around very quick as to what makes a difference through social media… that this is an easy place…to get EU citizenship for a child, and if numbers do increase then you do have a real problem…so I would say if the numbers were small, now is the time to make that law…

Carroll It was about economics, it was about having to support those children then, thinking that they weren't going to be supporting themselves…they weren't going to participating back or whatever…that's what it was about

Ryan Absolutely yeah, so they took the, I think that removal to right to [the] land

Evidently, what emerges from this excerpt is a shift away from the supposed moral concern justifying the 2004 ICR legislative changes, towards a more pragmatic position allegedly based on deterrence and unsubstantiated economic necessity. The economic contradiction is not referred to in relation to Direct Provision managed by private bodies and forced dependency on state provisions for certain 'newcomers' due to work permit restrictions, while 'other newcomers' are legally permitted to work as essential contributors to the Irish economy. Nor is there reflexive query that contrasts Irish born children of 'non-Irish' parents with those of Irish parent/s who still maintain entitlement and are afforded state provisions.

Overall pragmatism emerges juxtaposed against either a moral regard or disregard. In fact, it becomes a rational pragmatism, as it is perceived, which seems to be a key underlying feature used to vindicate opinion which shapes some participants' subjectivities in relation to and beyond questions of migration. Perceived rational pragmatism seems to be a fundamental feature that shields the individual from perceiving their own moral stance. As such, it is a mechanism of nullification that permits the subject to uphold beliefs, attitudes and behaviours with moral disregard, while at the same time perceiving oneself to be a moralizing subject. Such a perceived rational pragmatist approach would seem to be a part of the cultural repertoire of both the Irish liminal and subconscious psyche which seems reliant on amorality and opportunism. Either through deceiving oneself or through deceiving 'others', pragmatism remains rationally constructed even if quite blatantly inherently illogical and/or immoral.

Such perceived rational pragmatism is not a contemporary phenomenon and may not be a unique condition of the Irish consciousness, though perhaps it may be accentuated within the doctrine of neo-liberal governmentality. One somewhat unique condition in the Irish context is the acquisition of language and the dominance of the English language in contrast to the ostensibly more native Irish language.

Within the Drumcondra focus group, in order for someone to become 'Irish', a twofold dimension in relation to the pragmatics of learning the dominant language appears to surface. Initially the conversation seems to focus on the assimilationist view of the obligation for a migrant to acquire the dominant language when Ciara makes the point that, "speak in English…they should learn the language". The

rationally pragmatic justification for such obligatory measures is that, '"it can lead to ghettoization if people are not made to learn the languages of the country…" (Ciara).

Continuing on from this, a question relating to the importance of acquiring Irish language is posed to evoke further thought and deliberation on the underlying dilemmas relating to language acquisition.

Ciara I do think the Irish culture is a bit… diluted to a certain… not diluted, but it is not as rich as it could be… because people in Ireland, including myself… don't speak the language, or a lot of people don't speak it, but I'd say really language is part of Ireland and part of the physical location and the words that describe the physical features of the country, I think, you know, eh, I think it's sad that we don't all speak Irish, cos I do think we are losing

Ryan …it's very difficult to know, I mean, we, do this in a different class, we speak about it a lot… in, what's the class, in language and cultural identity… and, I mean, the Irish language itself has been rolled back over a hundred years or more, more… but I mean it's, it's a different thing, colonizers, you know, forced us out of our land, you know, over many years… Irish being indigenous… the majority language… the first… people and that happened over a very long period of time, so, it became a minority language because of that, so it, now English is the, the spoken language, and when you look around at business -

Ciara …I think there was a kind of snobbery about English being a better language because the dominant people at the time spoke it

Carroll Yeah colonization

Ryan [It] would be… Ciara if you look at… sorry… we were doing this last week about… you take on the

> identification of the master… and the colonizer… would've been the master… so you take on their identity… and their norms and their language and everything else, and you associate the Irish culture a little bit and the Irish language being inferior, it takes a long time to knock that out of you

Within this extract, there would seem to be a clear association made between language and cultural identity formation. Initially it appears the loss of Irish language over a temporal period is seen as a form of cultural dilution but it is then seemingly argued that adopting the language used by those in a dominant position is perceived as favourable (as detailed in chapter two). Importantly, the historic position of Ireland in the context of British colonialism seems to be expressed as being socially advantaged through the exposure to and acquisition of the English language. The attainment of English language, with the waning of Irish language, appears to be translated as beneficial for presumably international business in current times by Ryan. Ciara seems to concur with this view and perceives the attainment of English as an enabler of social development mobility. The inference is that both positions combine to highlight a perceived rational pragmatist view of cultural appropriation which is rationalized according to economic development and elevated relative social status.

Ciara also seems to draw from a more nuanced position to pose the proposition of the subordinate becoming the dominant, evidently revealing both an understanding of the power/knowledge paradigm but also, though not explicitly stated, conceivably suggesting a link to demands of assimilation nowadays of 'newcomers' and the uneven power dynamic that may exist between the Irish and 'newcomers'. There is also the sense that society is always entrapped in such a power dichotomy between inferior/superior cultures. It is such a predestined condition that manifestly forces the collective status quo to dominate and excuses such a perceived rational pragmatist approach to demand integration through assimilation, rather than negotiate and arbitrate interculturalism and/or an inter-lingual society.

When the conversation during the Clondalkin focus group progresses to discussing how one might re-imagine the issue arises of welfare exploitation by 'outsiders' contrasted with activities of vulture capitalists, Irish or otherwise. There seems to be

recognition that with mobility and assumedly globalization, "it's not just about Irish ripping us off, it's Europe as well" (Christine), together with reference to American vulture capitalists and China being able to buy up Irish assets. Apparently, it is because external players are seen to have the financial capital and that, at a pragmatic level, as is somewhat rhetorically posed "it's all about money and resources, isn't it?" (Christine).

Also interwoven with mobility would seem to be access to resources. When it is implied within the Clondalkin discussion, that certain vulture capitalists may have benefited from their 'Irish' identity or connections to Ireland in acquiring Irish assets, Kelsey views this as "not really fair". An appeal to fairness is counter-posed with consumer choices that place emphasis on 'insider' allegiance towards supporting people within the "home country" (Christine). When asked what the appeal in 'Guaranteed Irish' is for the consumer, the conversation continues as follows.

Brady	Buying Irish
Christine	Where it grows
Dana	Yeah, cos you're saying -
Kelsey	Spending in Ireland
Dana	Yeah, you're gonna give… put money back into the country
YB	But yeah, but why?
Dana	Because like, we need to like think of ourselves before others, in all fairness, like you have to take care of yourself and then when you're well off and stuff then you can, have the ability to help others

Evidently, there is the estimated opinion that supporting Irish produce through particular consumption habits means, as Kelsey later substantiates, "you're keeping the money in the country so we can get it back". There seems to be a rational pragmatism towards improved quality of life for those deemed to be members of the Irish collective through such a financially cyclical production/consumption process. Nonetheless, while this would assume generalized continual improvement of the quality of life within Ireland, this dimension of development and increased wealth of

the Irish nation does not appear to be reflected upon in an altruistic manner, i.e. welcoming of asylum seekers or 'others' less wealthy. That is to say, neither the more outward looking view of immigration being the result of poverty, which Sassen (2005: 36) claims is overly simplistic, nor, the consideration that inequitable trade relations between wealthy nations/regions and developing nations may be a cause of immigration (Mancini and Finlay, 2008: 11) would seem to be reflected upon by participants.

Furthermore this individualistically based perceived rational pragmatism of consumption patterns contrasts with perceived views of collective action in relation to what is deemed "the national interest" (Christine). When prompted, Christine expands on the ambiguity of the concept of national interest.

Christine … it's very hard to define what the national good is, or who defines what it is… and I think people will assert their, even out of spite, they'll nearly say, "ah I don't know up in Dublin, not them", you know like… Dublin only represents one county in the whole country and there's a little bit of, we don't pull together in that national sense, I don't think… we're divided on it… all the legions of county and stuff, so I think that somehow goes into the bigger political picture where we are divisive, we're not kind of altruistic for the national good, we might be at a small level but -

Kelsey I think a lot of Irish food is like now getting more bought because Aldi and Lidl use Irish goods so I mean like they use Irish

Christine Produce yeah

Kelsey Meat and… fruit and veg, so it's a bit, a lot of it, and it is cheaper, it is, it would be a lot cheaper so it is getting more, a lot more… but

Christine But not everybody would go with the melon thing, even though knowing it might be, others will say "to hell with the Irish jobs, I'll take the cheaper melon… even

> knowing the consequences, or to spite they might say, "ah feck, let them go down the swannee like, we'll still buy the dearer one, the cheaper one… because, that's our choice, freedom of choice and"… they won't see the bigger picture, you know… 'cos they only [live] for themselves

Within this retort what is described is a sense of disproportionate political influence from Dublin in contrast to the rest of Ireland more generally, and perhaps rural Ireland. The divisiveness within Irish society is seen to produce a limited level of altruistic attitudes and behaviour and this may be linked back to discussion on parochialism and historicity (refer to chapter five and six). The conversation progresses to describe the pragmatic juxtaposition between purchasing Irish and buying the cheapest produce irrespective of source. Evidenced here is a perceived pragmatist rationale that jostles between emphasising taking care of your own in the first instance and the perceived pragmatic consumer choices individuals make, rationalized on economic circumstance. It may be the fact that the historical insecurity of an 'Irish' identity within the ambiguity of racial theory, as described by O'Toole (2000: 27), lends itself towards such contemporary ambiguities within the collective consciousness of people self-subscribed as Irish.

Overall it would seem the supporting basis for perceptions that are rational pragmatic can shift between economic, cultural and social dimensions thus facilitating conscious choices that negate genuinely considering moral implications of the a subject's actions. It could be conjectured that such juxtaposition of perceived rational pragmatisms not only provide individuals within the Irish collective, with the privilege of making politically persuaded voting decisions and being influenced by dominant media positions that construct the pragmatics for an individual's perceived rationale. Quintessentially it also facilitates an individual's ability to maintain certain justifications or perspectives that might ordinarily conflict with their own self-ascribed ideological positions. In effect, a process such as perceived rational pragmatism disavows ideology or the self-sense of morality, without necessitating perception of oneself as amoral.

9.5 Migration and the management of cultural appropriation

As discussed previously, the blurring of conservative and neoliberal values can also be exposed in relation to emigration and immigration. This section focuses on several discussions on emigration which primarily frame it within the context of returnee migration and the partial benefits such migration affords the island nation state.

Within the Drumcondra focus group discussion, more contemporary forms of outward mobility and emigration are discussed as alternatively occurring processes counter-posed with immigration. Unlike previous generations of Irish emigration, the view seems to be that contemporary flows are more transient and that returnee migration is a more likely phenomenon.

Alana I suppose one thing about Ireland is, because the country is so small… lots of young people have travelled abroad… so they would have had experience, well I happen to have an awful lot of, my parents wouldn't have travelled… but I know my siblings children they have gone all over the globe and brought back that difference, so although there was a huge influx of people, people would have been aware in Ireland of different cultures and stuff like that, and I think that came from the country being as small as it is… and if you wanted to go anywhere you had to leave Ireland… you know, I mean even if you went on holidays and things like that but for people that were travelling sure they went to the other side of the world

Carroll I think that brings up something else though because you have an expectation if your child or children… go to another country that they're treated decently… so you should have the same expectations

Within this excerpt, Alana would seem to make a generational comparison between the generations prior to their own, with that of young people, as well as the change in mobility over such a time period. Apparently, increased mobility beyond the nation state is seen to facilitate exposure to and experience of new cultures with the

transference of such acquired knowledge through returnee migration. Such emigration flows of young Irish people are seen as enablers of cross-cultural appropriation of alternative ethnic attributes and customs. In this way what seems to be perceived as beneficial is the adoption of certain forms of cultural knowledge by young Irish people, rather than the incorporation of the 'newcomer' who might possess a diverse range of cultural repertoires. Underlying this is a subtle dynamic whereby the judgement which places value and deems what is worthy of cultural appropriation would appear to be internalized within the Irish collective. The implication is that, it is the choices of journeys and discoveries of young Irish people which determine the adoptions of what is appropriated, as well as the status quo of Irish society at a given time, which governs what is deemed of value from such cultural appropriation through rewards.[77]

In a sense, returnee emigration would seem to be a process by which intercultural learning occurs but it is externalized from the nation state. Furthermore, emigration in this manner may then be a way of creating and managing cultural appropriation. Conceivably this is because it demands a level of assimilation by creating mechanisms that favour the returnee migrant's newly acquired skills, which are deemed beneficial for the status quo. Overall, albeit within a period of liquid modernity, what may be occurring is a system that maintains conservatism through the selective management (acceptance or rejection) of flows of cultural appropriation.

Although from the extract above, the impression gained contains the implication that such emigration and returnee migration is a recent phenomenon, within the Coolock focus group discussion, Tierney suggests otherwise when Conlaoch challenges the concept of citizenship.

> **Conlaoch** People who are attracted… to this island are coming here for the purpose, they're either our own returning or they're people that are coming here that they need to learn before they go back out again, and so they should have, they should have the right to live here, [as] I would claim the right to live anywhere on this planet

[77] This would also supplement the opinion that the state looks to control, though active confinement of refugees and asylum seekers, so as to manage inter-cultural interaction (Fanning, 2002: 87*ff.*). As described by O'Donovan (2009: 103) by creating such isolation, it reduces cultural impact on the assumed homogenous and dominant society.

Tierney Would yea?

Conlaoch I belong to the planet… I don't actually go anywhere 'cos I'm not allowed off the island anyway but

Keela 'Cos you've no passport

Conlaoch I don't have, well no I can get off the island without a passport but… I've gone off the island but… I could physically go if I wanted to but… I'm spiritual, I'm tied to this land… and I, I am for the rest of my life, I mean I knew that when I came here… I knew that I wasn't going to go anywhere (slight laughter) but em -

Tierney So you are an Irish citizen?

Conlaoch No

Tierney Oh are you not?

Conlaoch I don't vote, I don't participate… in the fictions that are here at all, I am, I will be, I consider myself as part of Éire -

Tierney Um, ok

Conlaoch Which is the spiritual entity of, of the island, I would consider myself as part island, and I have a right to live here the same as all other people who don't vote here and they, they don't consider themselves as citizens of this republic, this em, republic of Ireland which was eh, which was created in nineteen-forty-eight, as a, as a company, as -

Tierney So, if half a billion people arrive tomorrow that there's, want to be citizens of this island -

Conlaoch They're not going to arrive

Tierney You've no problem with that?

Conlaoch Half a billion people are not going to arrive here

Tierney Well if they all arrive together and say, "look I wanna be part of this thing that you're bangin' -

Emmet Well again Tierney

Tierney What are you going to say?

Conlaoch I'd say welcome and come in but they're not going to happen…

Tierney Ok…

Conlaoch The reality is everyone looks after themselves… the island will decide how many people are, are welcome to come here… she will herself decide that… and, you're never going to get this… huge influx of people, that people always talk about, and dodge they're going to"

Tierney No, I, I, that's just

Grainne I'd like to… I think it's really hard, I don't think it's that simple…

Conlaoch I think that Irish citizenship is a construct and it's not real, and so I couldn't possibly consider… in all honesty I could not consider myself a citizen of Ireland… because… the government of Ireland, the state, the state of Ireland… have a notion that they can inflict suffering on the people, on the living people of I, of this land… in order to keep their economic books balanced, (slight pause) anybody who considers that they can cause harm to living beings… I couldn't possibly be a part of that… grouping

YB I think yeah, you've kind of highlighted a really important point which is this aspect of it being a social construct

Conlaoch I mean because I was born on this island, they, the state of the Republic of Ireland, well the free state, where I was born in the free state, but… the state of the republic

> of Ireland consider that I am a citizen, and try to inflict all their restrictions on me as they would on any other citizen, but, I'm not a citizen, I never will be a citizen… because I cannot support any system that is willing to cause suffering to living beings

This extract presents the adamant position held by Conlaoch who appears to challenge the notion of citizen and citizenship, and concordantly the notion of organised society and (inter)dependency. The argument Conlaoch gives seems to be an inversion of a perceived rational pragmatist perspective. Conlaoch justifies the mobility and inward migration of people from anywhere based on the view that if Conlaoch can and should claim the right to go and live anywhere, then anyone should be able to claim the same right to live in Ireland. Conlaoch's position would seem to endorse complete free mobility for anyone on the planet. When this is challenged with the prospect of overpopulating the island, participant Conlaoch presents an illuminating refutation by implying a more natural process would occur whereby the land of the island would determine the population size of inhabitants. This position inverts the argument and would seem to have a more post-humanist leaning.

Conlaoch appears to expand on the justification for such a position through disassociation with the nation state's notional construction of citizen and citizenship. Irish citizenship is suggested to be, not only merely a construct, but a concept that is based on an imaginary. Conlaoch, then leads on to describe how it is a concept invented by the state and utilized by government so that state authority can inflict suffering on people. In support of this, Conlaoch seems to make reference to the recent economic predicament Ireland faced and claims that Irish governance is commensurate to a system that inflicts suffering on a populace. In a generalized yet very real sense, the appearance is that Conlaoch desires no association or allegiance to the nation state, in particular, non-participation in an assemblage that restricts and inflicts suffering.

9.6 Governance, regionalism and globalization

As discussed above, when conversation relating specifically to Irish governance arises, it can be portrayed as quite a flawed or corrupt nation state. Other than this, in most of the focus group discussions minimal referencing appears to be made to Irish governance prior to the additional question comparing European governance with Irish governance. Irish state governance seems to be perceived as either in need of top down EU governance within the natural progression of regionalism, or conversely, Irish governance lacks the representative determination to develop self-autonomous "good" governance as a successful functioning democratic nation state. In either instance, Irish state governance would appear to be infantilized by its depiction as weak and underdeveloped.

European governance seems to be portrayed as being either one of benefit or in juxtaposition as a burden for the nation state of Ireland. In each instance, quite polarized views seem represented yet the commonality between both positions would seem to be that European governance is seen as an overarching and dominant force impacting on Irish society. Thus, evidently it is a governing force that should either be confronted and vetoed by the state, or, one that should be fully embraced and capitulated to by the Irish state.

Within the Limerick focus group discussion, in answer to the latter additional question comparing European governance in relation to Irish governance, Charlie seems to respond by concentrating on the perceived constructive powers European governance brings to Ireland.

Charlie …I actually think that most of equality laws that were introduced in here came from our European basis, where we had to comply, which was to me, now it could've been bad laws, and it may be bad laws in the future, but all these equality laws that came in were a plus I think for the Irish people, because our own government, still are - and they can't even comply with some of the laws even on the environment -… dragging their heels, obviously they don't have the money to comply as quickly as you'd want to, but… I think being

	part of Europe has given the Irish people, (pause)… a balanced standing in the eyes of the world, as if we were, rather than if we didn't join it, I think it's a good vessel to economically grow and be a part of, if you like a powerful… and I mean as far as I know, we always have the option to get out
Juliana	Do we? (murmurs)
Charlie	And, you know, without Europe our motorways wouldn't've been built
Juliana	Ah no
Charlie	They would've some of them but not to the extent

This extract seems to concisely capture a certain sentiment towards European governance as well as Irish governance. The suggestion is that European supremacy is one that has power to oblige the Irish state to enact laws of equality, yet somewhat paradoxically; such imposition would imply the erosion of self-determination and thus could be interpreted as autocratic. What also emerges, yet what seems explicitly unobserved by the participants, is the juxtaposition between the top down obligation towards environmental protection, in contrast to European level financial support for the expansion of transportation infrastructure. Thus, the expressed perceptions of Ireland would seem to be of a peripheral sub-state, within a more imperial super-state. Ireland would seem to be perceived as dependent on and subordinated by European affairs rather than as an equal member of a decentralized political Europe with self-directing regions in which cultural plurality is maintained (Tovey *et al.*, 1989: 2).

Similarly, the responses from the participants in the Belfast focus group, looking at European governance in comparison with Irish governance, seem to portray an aversion towards European governance. Molly claims, "Irish governance is gombeen politics, it's corrupt, it's misogynistic, it's capitalist", to which Tony additionally affirms, "it's nepotistic" and later asserts, "Ireland is corrupt, Europe's anti-democratic". The implication from these statements is a double-bind between corruption and autocracy. Such perceptions could be seen as a facilitation of what Chandler (2010: 150) refers to as a 'façade democracy' (as detailed in the third chapter).

Within the Drumcondra focus group, when European governance is considered in relation to Irish governance, a similar recognition of the supremacy of European law appears to be made, as well as the apparent relatively minor position Ireland possesses in affecting outcomes at a transnational level. There are however, apparently divergent opinions within the focus group discussion that were either outright dismissive of EU governance or saw EU governance as the panacea to Ireland's economic woes. The initial response to the question of European governance from Alana seems quite striking.

Alana	They're dictators
Ryan	Well about control, we've ceded a lot of our control to the European Union
Carroll	Sovereignty yeah
Ryan	Governance anyway, and in particular we don't control our own eh, interest rates, you know, so that's a huge thing… and a lot of laws, I mean the European laws, you know, they're above the supreme court laws in theory, if you take back action in Europe above supreme courts in Ireland's judicial system at its upper levels… it's actually ruled by -
Carroll	Budgets and fiscal and things like that -
Ryan	Is run by a different grouping in the European Union…
Carroll	And we're a very small part of that, we're a very small influence on that
Eddie	…we have ceded some of our, our control… the question I would ask is "have we ceded enough control?"… if we had conceded our, if there was more control from Europe, would we have gotten into the mess that we're in? if we had more control, if perhaps the French and the Germans have more of a say in the way we run the country, would we be in the mess we're in?... you know, I don't think we would have but I think

	the fact that we've had them control things for a while helped us get back on track… Ryan talks about, "we weren't able to control our own interest rates", we had the most historically low interest rates in the world, had we been able to control our interest rates, would we have started to, you know, put up our interest rates, eh, so that we couldn't compete, you know, in the world? I'm not sure that, that argument stands up
Ciara	I don't know, I kind of think, you, kind of local government and everything like that is important… for even, kind of looking for Europe, em, to Europe… for your economic structures and, I just feel that that's very, handing over power, it's kind of like saying, "we're not mature enough to handle this ourselves because we've made a balls of the last time"
Eddie	We've just proved it
Ciara	They've even offered this…. they're kind of infantilising us you know, (pause) we're children so therefore we need Brussels to look after us
Alana	Eddie's after presuming that even they know what they're doing

Eddie makes a significant admission in relation to control over interest rates which implies that it is better to concede control of fiscal policy etc. to the European level of governance. Eddie concurrently seems to provide justification which emphasizes the lack of leverage Ireland has when operating within the global financial system as an independent nation state. This would imply an inescapable bind whereby globalized financial systems drive and determine regionalization. These views would seem on a par with Sassen's (2005: 38) observations, who writes more generally, 'the state itself has been transformed by the growth of a global economic system and other transnational processes. These have brought on conditions that bear on the state's regulatory role and its autonomy… [They have also] affected the power of different

agencies within it, and furthered the internationalization of the inter-state system through proliferation of bi- and multilateral agreements.'

Also present within this extract would appear to be the notion of Ireland as an immature and thus irresponsible nation. Whereas this is the perceived view from those in power external to Ireland, it is also comparable with earlier comments whereby participants seem to give excuses for Ireland's shortcomings because of its relatively recent independence and attained sovereignty.

The reality of the effects of an ever globalising world is discussed in several of the conversations and is related to the question of governance. Within such conversations the aspect of perceived rational pragmatism would seem to become prominent again, whereby economic necessity would seem to become the dominant context in which it is framed. Towards the closing of the Drogheda discussion, Diarmuid appears to refer to what is perceived to be the existential reality of the situation for the Irish economy in the context of transnationalism and broader regionalization.

Diarmuid We tend to think as ourselves as insular, we're an island obviously… we're, we're cut off from everywhere, we're not, we're part of the EU, and we have laws and responsibilities as part of the EU, Brussels, links between the United Nations… and we're, as you know, financial situations and economic situations in this country has been dire for the last few years, and who provides us with most of the employment now? multinational companies… we are dependent very much on the outside world… we couldn't exist without it, you know

The remarks Diarmuid makes would seem very pragmatic and grounded in the reality of contemporary times. They appear to provide recognition of the circumstance of the nation state economy operating within a macro more globalized financial capitalist structure but also refer to the absolute requirement to maintain our presence within such, as a matter of economic survival. The suggestion is that this dependency creates a sense of powerlessness and futility in conceptualising any alternative. Participants' perceptions challenge the less threatening notion of 'glocalization' (Robertson, 2001;

Inglis, 2008; O'Donovan, 2009; Ritzer, 2011) which seems to imply a relatively balanced crossover between micro/bottom up and macro/top down processes of cultural and economic interexchange. Instead there would seem to be recognition of regional actors in globalization dominating from a supranational level of governance. Participants' accounts do not seem to support the idea that identities have become adapted to globalization in a complementary manner, as Inglis and Donnelly (2011: 129) imply. Instead, and plausibly in part as a reaction to the macro processes of globalization, which are perceived as subordinating, evidence does suggest *Irishness* is understood in more mythological ethno-racial and what O'Donovan (2009: 100) point towards, regressive nationalist terms.

Nonetheless, the acceptance of transnational corporate contribution to the Irish social fabric would seem incongruent with the denial of other processes of globalization that might plausibly warrant envisaging conceptions of identities as hybrid or more fluid (Faas, 2010: 11). This may also lead to the occurrence of a form of ambivalence whereby there is a reluctance to conceive *Irishness* in more inclusive terms, as evidenced in the general acceptance by participants of the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum legislative amendments (as discussed previously), and an acceptance of autocracy and/or corporate authority.

9.7 Chapter nine conclusions

Chapter nine begins by presenting discussion by participants on how the known benefits of the welfare state model in Ireland are deemed to surpass those of the US welfare model. Discussions seem to make apparent that by expressing interest in what is believed to be Irish culture, it should be a satisfactory means to determine an individual's claim to state welfare provisions. Besides, the perfect citizen appears to be perceived as law abiding, dutiful and responsible to the nation state and this is reciprocated through access to rights and welfare. Progressing from this, the notion of "free" state assistance is contested and counterarguments refer to the Irish taxation system and either direct or generalized reciprocity. Such cost-benefit reasoning seems to provide an excuse for feelings of resentment towards 'newcomers' who are believed to unevenly benefit from welfare provisions. Instead of appreciating the potential addition of tangible and immaterial economic and socio-cultural capital

gained from ‘newcomers’ and diversification, the impression is that returnee migration is the preferred substitute in acquiring new forms of capital or knowledge.

Generally, the current welfare state model is perceived as deficient. This seems to manifest, both in disapproval aimed at the maladministration of state policies and practices, as well as towards citizens who abuse the welfare state model across the social-class strata of Irish society. What emerges is a politics of a deserving “us” versus an undeserving “them” which creates a perceived binary division based on classist and racist assumptions. In relation to such a dichotomy, a basic anecdotal account, of property ownership and the allocation of land, is overtly contested as being anthropocentric. Instead the apparent counter-position exposed by one participant is an inversion whereby the deemed reality is that the land and nature own humans, thus no one should claim governing access over the Irish territorial expanse.

What materializes from the transcribed material is that conservatism is an ascribed inclination amongst the Irish, at an individual and political level. Thus, the impression is that *Irishness* is viewed as being characterized by values of conservatism. The erosion of the traditional would seem to be comprehended as undermining conservative leanings, along with sustaining unfair rights of access to state provisions. The shift towards denationalisation and economisation seems to be recognised as a development within national governance towards the acceptance and implementation of neo-liberal policies. Within the Belfast focus group discussion comprehension of conservatism seems slightly more nuanced. The impression seems to be that the Irish value system is based on moral and political conservatism, while purporting to uphold notions of equality, might more aptly intimate neo-conservative predilections. Intermeshed with this appears to be an historical understanding of Catholicism, and its institutions, as having acted as proxies for what should have been provided for by the state. More importantly, in the context of this dissertation, conservatism within contemporary times is explicitly discussed with regard to the management of migration controls. Transnational capitalism and regional economic uncertainties seem to be perceived as governing immigration.

Although it would initially seem to contrast general views presented thus far, discussion on the outcomes of the 2004 ICR gives the impression that various participants perceive it as being founded on racism and national chauvinism.

Nonetheless, by some this is resolved whereby justifications for its enactment are made on the grounds of a perceived sense of threat to security from the non-European, non-developed world, 'other'. Intra-European migration which is perceived as driven by principles of economic supply and demand is also perceived as in quite negative light. Some participants' perspectives appear to hint at a degree of regressive nationalistic sentiment caused by both racism and protectionism, however this seems to present even during the rebound in relative economic prosperity in the Irish national context.

Interrelated to the topic immediately above, discussion progresses towards a description of the main findings which culminates in the proposition that concealed within discourse is the juxtaposition of rational or irrational pragmatisms within tendencies towards neo-liberal thinking and resided supremacy. In support of this thesis further evidence is unfolded to elucidate the notion of perceived rational pragmatism in conversation. As mentioned above, some participants' challenge the outcomes of the 2004 ICR and as detailed in previous chapters there seems to be the view that citizenship can and should be attained through bloodline descent, birthright and/or temporal exposure to Irish society. Nevertheless, several participants would appear to be decisively in favour of the 2004 ICR legislative changes. Fascinatingly such support is not contained within a vacuum of unawareness. There is a consciousness of how dominant media representations and political discourse falsely presented arguments during the 2004 ICR campaign. Even with the benefit of such hindsight, as explicitly accepted, some participants maintain and espouse support for its passing into legislation by relying on the newly found basis of perceived security threat and economic necessity. A further example of perceived rational pragmatism emergent within the thematic analysis, and documented in chapter nine, relates to the dominant usage of English language over Irish language. Some participants actively differentiate *Irishness* from 'otherness' and endorse the assimilationist view that demands the migrant 'other' to acquire English. Conflicting with ideological views on the importance of acquiring Irish language (as detailed in relation to linguistic capital in previous chapters), integration is gratified through acculturation rather than mediated through interculturalism or the conception of an inter-lingual society. Participants' notions on consumerism provide further evidence in support of the theory being espoused. The perception is that it is logically pragmatic to express a

predilection towards consuming Irish produce, as well as prioritizing the Irish over 'others', because it is internally cyclical, thus perceived as beneficial for the Irish economy and Irish collectivity. This seemingly rationally pragmatic view neglects reflection upon altruism, nor does it adequately consider the attainment of commodities imported and processes of globalisation.

The closing section of chapter nine focuses attention on governance, regionalism and globalisation. Irish state governance is portrayed as what would seem to be immature within the circumstance of contemporary regionalism. It is also perceived as frail in that the nation state is depicted as lacking political experience and thus capability towards self-management and self-determination. For this reason, some participants seem to perceive European dominance as a positive development as it obliges the Irish state to enact progressive laws of equality. Conversely, such an undemocratic arrangement would seem to imply that Ireland is in a bind between state ineptitude and European level autocracy. To add to this, some participants refer to the global financial system and transnationalism as further binds on the ability of the Irish state to adequately manage its independency, yet, paradoxically Ireland seems perceived as inextricably dependant on globalisation and perhaps foreign direct investment from transnational corporations.

This concluding chapter, of the results and findings, presents a selection of the more expansive motifs concerning both inter- and intra-state governance and globalization. In keeping with the overall directionality of the thesis and orientation of analysis in the previous chapters, the closing results and findings chapter focuses attention on contemporary perceptions of governance as a means of inclusion/exclusion. For this reason, it primarily observes perceived views on the welfare state model, in conjunction with immigration and migration control regimes. As the culmination of the results and findings in their entirety, chapter nine progresses by introducing and substantiating empirically the proposition of the socio-psychological concept of perceived rational pragmatism. Emerging from the overall thesis up until this point, this theorization is then elaborated on and expanded both theoretically and descriptively in the subsequent chapter which documents the overall conclusions. Thus linking in with this and previous chapters, chapter ten commences by presenting an overview of the findings and results interwoven with theory and more inferred interpretations of the data as documented and analysed heretofore.

10 Conclusions

Although the general theme of this research project is immensely expansive, the focus and motivation from the outset relate both to how 'Irish' identity is perceived, primarily by members within the dominant norm of Irish society and how such perceptions reflect onto the lives of 'others', as included, excluded or marginal. Thus by being intentionally less assumptive, this research endeavours to raise thought, deliberation and reflection on the impact of more subtle nuances associated with identity formation which have an effect on the most marginalized 'other' within the society of Ireland, e.g. people barely living within the Direct Provision system and people physically excluded from the comforts of a developed world economy, such as Ireland. It is for this reason that the focus of attention of the concluding section will be on addressing emergent thoughts, discussions and sociological critique pertinent to the contemporary spatio-temporal condition of individual people that are 'othered'. The justification for this is that, upon reflection of how we define ourselves, we might expose the gratuitous hardships we inflict on other people through antonymic exclusion.

This concluding chapter details the emergent motifs relating to how *Irishness* is perceived within the current era of liquid modernity. Within the remit of this qualitative study, this chapter describes and reflects upon some of the substantial ways in which 'Irish' identity is socially (re)constructed in contemporary Ireland. The initial section details an overview of the contributions of this dissertation to the body of knowledge on identity, being and the self within the ever mutable social fabric. The second section reviews the findings of the dissertation by discursively deliberating on perceived *Irishness* and the processes by which identity is (re)constructed in Ireland within the continuum of an ever changing society. This progresses into the third section which further deconstructs and theorises the process of 'perceived rational pragmatism' in the context of the continuum of liquid modernity and *ordo-liberalism*. The final section provides a closing for the dissertation overall and makes proposals for future research opportunities.

10.1 Principal contributions of this dissertation

In summary, there are five main findings that emerge and are identified in the social (re)construction of Irish identity within the continuum of liquid modernity. These findings are considered to be an empirical addition to the body of knowledge on 'Irish' identity. Most noteworthy is the unambiguous centrality of essentialist notions of race in the social construction of *Irishness*. Although numerous mechanisms affecting identity formation are identified, the (re)construction of an 'Irish' identity occurs through these fundamental processes. First, at a micro-level, justifications for claims of being 'Irish' are linked to genealogical lineage and the importance of one's heredity, wider family ties, clan and community. Secondly, claiming *Irishness* through the connection to an ancient past is practiced as a means to elevate and project status of 'native' above all other people. Thirdly, a new construction that differentiates between being 'Irish' and being an 'Irish' citizen is reliant on the superficial visual, which is racialized and hierarchical. Fourthly, compounded ethno-racial distinctions are reified and conceived of in essentialist terms; the singular ideal of an 'Irish' identity is extrapolated and superimposed onto the collective. These processes combine to constrain conceptions of identity as fluid. Finally, a crucial process exposed, is that identity in Ireland is formed within the social condition of conservatism, and propensity towards *ordo-liberalism*, which create an environment that lends itself to the socio-psychological process of 'perceived rational pragmatism'.

Perceived rational pragmatism is presented as thesis synthesis herein and as a contribution, albeit incremental, to the body of knowledge on socio-psychological theory. The third section of chapter ten explores and develops further theorisation on the process of perceived rational pragmatism. By scrutinizing and deconstructing specific discourse, the theory emerges organically and becomes evident in the research overall. The agential dimension of the socio-psychological process posed, is that it exposes and challenges the illogical bias which occurs within the production of a classificatory schema reliant on the very notions of race in defining who the Irish are in contemporary Ireland. In addition, the qualitative methodological approach detailed in the fourth chapter which incorporates the viewing of a multimedia presentation, made from one-to-one interviews, midway through the focus group discussions, is an evidently productive addition to the body of knowledge on qualitative methodological approaches to researching contemporary issues of identity (re)construction.

10.2 Review of thesis: *Irishness* as perceived in an era of liquid modernity

Many forms of identity constructions become apparent throughout the research. Participants build a sense of *Irishness* based on family and genealogical linkage, physiological traits, political identification, national cultural identity affiliation (such as language, sport, music) and often through differentiation from 'others'. Similar to research by Inglis and Donnelly (2011: 139) what is found 'is a *mélange* of identities and senses of belonging. Deep-rooted belonging is mixed with elective belonging and both come together with a general sense of belonging to Ireland.'

Across all of the stages of the research, it becomes apparent that one's immediate family is perceived as a foundational prerequisite for the cultural transmission of values, attitudes and behaviours which are produced and reproduced trans-generationally. The particularities of such traits would seem to be deemed as explicitly Irish, and often even more specifically localized. The subject-constructed narratives of participants portray an emphasis on the importance of immediate family in an idealized, romanticized and static way, similar to what Byrne and O'Mahony (2012: 58) detail in relation to classical studies of dominant narratives in the monolithic and enduring portrayal of Irish family life.[78] Evidently, the impression is that little consideration is given to a growing independence of the conjugal unit with potentially fewer kinship ties to distant relatives and where families, both nationally and internationally over the past century, may have become more democratic, smaller, less stable, and more diverse in form (Fine-Davis, 2011: 5*ff.*; Seward *et al.*, 2005: 411; Goode, 1963: 1). Within the discussions, the participants do not seem to take into account the significant societal changes that have occurred, as reported by Fine-Davis (2011: 4),

> since the 1960s there have been vast social changes which have led to changing gender roles, changes in the nature of the family and a falling birth rate in Ireland and in Europe. In Ireland, we have witnessed major shifts in

[78] Arensberg, Conrad and Kimball, Solon (1940) published *Family and Community in Ireland* following an in-depth anthropological study of Irish families in County Care in the early 1930s as part of the Harvard Irish Study. Although of classical status, according to Seward *et al.* (2005: 422) 'Studies completed since the 1970s have overwhelmingly documented that the reign of stem-extended families (children reared beyond immediate parents) was primarily ideological and that they were not typical even in the area that Arensberg and Kimball had studied. Yet their descriptions of Irish families became the standard and the primary basis for claims that Ireland's families were an exception to the convergence pattern.'

> gender role attitudes and behaviour, including notably a major increase in women's labour force participation, and these shifts have been accompanied by changing patterns of family formation.

What also becomes evident, directly in relation to immediate family, and which is conversed about within several of the focus groups, is the perceived view of the role of the mother not only in family life but also in creating and continuing a distinctive sense of *Irishness*. The reproduction of parental distinctiveness based on desires to provide for the next generation at the cost of self-sacrifice is suggested as stemming from an historical viewpoint of the Irish as underdogs, having suffered under colonial oppression and a sense of yearning to succeed and progress. Although on the one hand, this may be understood positively in a maternal and protective sense, on the other hand, such perceived notions associating motherhood and *Irishness* may have the effect of contributing towards reproducing traditional patriarchal norms. Both in Ireland and elsewhere, there has been a considerable shift towards both unmarried and married women in the paid labour force (Seward *et al.*, 2005: 416), and yet the commonly perceived roles of mothers in the organization and upkeep of family life persist and remain conventionally conceived.

Genealogical lineage and the importance of one's hereditary and wider family ties would seem to provide justification for claims of being 'Irish'. The wider family comes across also as portrayed as integral to producing a sense of 'home' that is not merely the physical locality of one's living space, but a place, real or imagined, that encapsulates closeness amongst members of the wider family both spatially and emotionally. Members of the wider family, who may be based in Ireland, provide a sense of emotional attachment not only to the physical locality of Ireland, but also for claiming *Irishness*. As Inglis and Donnelly (2011: 130) contest,

> …place is more than a space for performing identities. It is [an] integral part of how individuals see and understand themselves, another identity block in the ongoing construction of a sense of self. It is about feeling at home with 'others' who are seen as similar, as having shared understandings, dispositions and ways of being in the world. This sense of belonging, of being at home, is obviously strongly associated with family and community.

Although generally family or marital status are considered the principal forms of social identity for people who deem themselves to be 'Irish', Inglis and Donnelly (2011) maintain emphasis on 'place'.[79] However, participant responses appear to impart an understanding of both immediate and wider family as being catalytic in an individual's self-association with an Irish locality and being 'Irish'. Essential to this is that such constructions of identity and sense of belonging are heavily rooted in perceived genealogical linkages irrespective of affiliations with the actual land of Ireland or even ethno-cultural exposure. That is to say, from the responses from participants the impression is that it is race, not space,[80] which principally determines underlying associations of being 'Irish'. In the context of globalization and migration, it may be that as real or imagined sense of place becomes unsettled, individuals resort more to reliance on family and race as a social indicator of distinction and, conversely, it leverages so that when an individual's homogeneity becomes perturbed their contingent reaction is the reliance on place and locality to provide a sense of a foundational belonging.

Layered into this is what Gilroy (1990: 114) describes,

> The term culture has expanded to displace any overt references to 'race' in the older, biological sense of the term. Culture is reductively conceived and is always primarily and 'naturally' reproduced in families. The nation is, in turn, conceived as a neat, symmetrical accumulation of family units and the supposedly homogenous culture - secured in part by sustained exposure to national history in the classroom - culminates in the experience of unified and continuous national identity.

Linked to conceptions of family, wider family and irreducible genealogical lineage, is the notion of clan. This notion of clan would seem parallel to some definitions of the nature of kinship, emphasising biological over social relationships, whereby 'irreducible genealogical connections, the given relations of actual connectedness… are utilized in building up kinship relations and categories' (Fortes, 1969: 52;

[79] This does not reduce from the consideration that 'place is seen as a major social indicator, of culture, class, nationality, urbanity and so forth.' And where place 'establishes similarities and differences and the strength of the bonds and boundaries that could unite or divide strangers' (Inglis and Donnelly, 2011: 131).

[80] In reference to Hagedorn's (2006) work entitled, 'Race not Space: a revisionist history of gangs in Chicago'

Strathern, 1975: 21).[81] Being a part of a clan is seen as a more authentic way of validating claims of *Irishness* and is interpreted as a lineage primarily through bloodline descent-constructs that extend back to the pre-medieval period. This comes across as corresponding with Strathern's (1975: 26) description of clan where 'it refers both to the world of processes in which local groups actually interact with one another and to the world of constructs in which (wo/)men posit common descent from ancestors, common substance in the form of semen or blood and so on.' Several participants also seem to interpret clan in biogenetic substance or bloodline terms, whereby the strength of the clan is dependent on reproduction but also on the expansion of essentialized kinship through propagation of the progeny which increases or widens the clan.

An interpretation given for the historical construction of social life in a feudalistic manner relates to the notion of grudge, and is also linked to feudal conflict. Its perpetuation even into contemporary times within Ireland links into notions of begrudgery or belittlement more generally, which is touched upon in several of the focus group discussions.

Parochialism appears to be particularly associated with rural Irish life.[82] With parochialism, 'people were seen and saw themselves as belonging to extended families from particular parishes…' (Inglis, 2009: 2; Inglis and Donnelly, 2011: 131). Nonetheless, parochialism can also be seen to differ from clan as it transcends clan loyalty and centres the community round the parish. People may be included in the parochial life but excluded through the construction of boundaries from membership in the clan category and vice-versa (Strathern, 1975: 26). What is fascinating from the discussions is the lack of dialogue of religion, specifically Christianity, in relation to parochialism. Instead, the appearance is given whereby parochial life is reinforced and maintained through club sports, in particular Irish sports such as Gaelic football and hurling.

[81] Kinship may be polysemic whereby its meaning is derived from genealogy and it may imply a metaphorical extension of such descent (Strathern, 1975: 31).

[82] As revealed in the findings, rural life is idealised across many of the focus group discussions. Such expressions complement O'Toole's description in 'Going West: The Country versus the City in Irish Writing' (O'Toole, 1985) but are based on a real sense of tradition that persists. To a degree traditional culture has dissolved, but perhaps it persists in new forms thus there isn't the sense of demoralisation or break-down because of that but from elsewhere (economics, dominance of state and beyond).

What emerges from the findings is a clear interest in sport and its relationship with 'Irish' identity formation and enrichment. Amongst certain participants sports involvement seems comprehended as a trait of being 'Irish', or a mechanism of becoming 'Irish', but also an essential prerequisite to *Irishness*. Sport would seem also to evoke in participants a preconceived sense of tribalism which has polysemic layers and bridges between constructs and categorizations based on clan, parochialism and community. This would logically imply an amalgamated relationship between ideological and transactional domains which is dialectical and permits a type of both exogamous and endogamous interchange between tribes. Even so, the overarching encapsulation of the cultural sphere of sport, particularly Irish sport, looks to be perceived as contained within the dogma of *Irishness*, Irish kinship and descent. Within several of the focus group discussions, sport is recognised as one of a diverse range of cultural repertoires specific to *Irishness*. In contrast, amongst younger participants the topic of sport is scarcely discussed, but when sport as a factor determining a person's degree of *Irishness* is discussed, it is challenged. This aspect is related to participants questioning of historicity (as described in the subsequent chapter).

Leading on from this is the consideration of sport as an example of contradicting cultural recognition. Sport is thus discussed in a more generalized fashion, not only in relation to participation but as a mechanism for galvanising and expressing collective solidarities within different levels of social organization. Sport, and team sport predominantly, is seen as catalyst or indicator of more elusive characteristics associated with being 'Irish', such as, enthusiasm and pride. As is discussed below, within the theme relating to becoming 'Irish', more elusive characteristics re-materialize as prerequisites for earning Irish status, which include, desiring and wanting to be a "good" citizen.

This progresses into a description of the spectacle of sport and its ties with nostalgia. The formation of memories appears to be associated with revelling sporting occasions within a public and social environment. It would seem that the spectacle of sport acts to provide regular rituals or practices which revolve around a shared familiarity and disposition and provide a basis on which participants can create social identities. Inglis (2009: 3) alludes to such a shared familiarity and disposition, though in relation to a sense of belonging to place, and complements this with the Bourdieusian concept

of *habitus*. Although people's allegiances may differ, ritualistic practices are perceived as similar within the Irish collectivity. Considering the habit of the spectacle of sport as a particularity of *Irishness* creates a degree of cultural *insiderism* or ethnocentrism that may overly rely on notions of 'unchanging essences of ethnic or national distinctiveness' (Gilroy, 1990: 116).

The subsequent theme is community. It comes across as a foundational characteristic of *Irishness*, in particular, in its association with traditional and Irish rural life. This would correspond with the view that 'tradition is a mode of integrating the reflexive monitoring of action with the time-space organisation of the community' and as Giddens (1996: 37) continues, 'tradition is not wholly static, because it has to be reinvented each new generation as it takes over its cultural inheritance from those preceding it.' Giddens' notion of the reproduction and development of tradition would seem relatable to participants drawing synonymous comparisons between cultural production and evolution or 'progress' (as further detailed below).

Furthermore, for some participants community is understood and discussed in a dualistic manner. It generally seems to be either used with polarity to describe an all-encompassing singular collective - the Irish community - or to describe groups within this as distinct from one another. It is used as a means of distinction and with this as a means to create linkages and bonds. In both cases the sense is that it homogenizes either, by placing individuals into discrete groups that are internally uniform, or, by interpreting society as a prearranged naturally homogenous collectivity. Although conceptions of community may manifest themselves in slightly different forms, it can be identified within this dichotomy, which is expanded further below. The feeling is that community is also intentionally described as disparate from notions of parochialism, as the latter is seen to relate directly to religious institutions, which are viewed as having negative connotations.

For community what becomes evident appears to be recognition of the continued importance of family (as above) yet, contradictorily, participants' views also complement Halberstam's (2003: 315) notion that community is becoming an archaic thing of the past. Inglis and Donnelly (2011: 127) suggest that 'the trend seems inexorable: the more the local becomes penetrated by global flows, the more people

move around the world, the more family and community become "disembedded"'.[83] Although Inglis and Donnelly's (2011: 127) interpretation implies that both family and community are inseparable, it is plausible that one maintains strong family bonds irrespective of the erosion of community in its outmoded sense, imagined or otherwise. In fact, as Giddens (1990: 108) states, 'kinship relations, for the majority of the population, remain important, especially within the nuclear family, but they are no longer the carriers of intensively organised social ties across time-space.'

The implication from the perceived views of participants in the discussions is that they seem to challenge the notion that late modernity results in the decline of the family but rather perhaps still support that 'some local milieux continue to be the hub of substantial kinship networks of rights and obligations' (Giddens, 1990: 108). Similarly, Corcoran *et al.* (2010: 138) looking at *Suburban Affiliations: Social Relations in the Greater Dublin Area*, refer to work that implies an intensification in the trend for suburban families to spend more social time with immediate family members and less with friends and neighbours. Perhaps evidenced from the findings, are the perpetuation and maintenance of familial and clannish associations in the construction of identities, as well as a reversion away from more collectivized views of community in the Irish context, communal existence being associated with religion and parochialism. Nonetheless, the fact that community is used to describe and create a foundational basis for an all-inclusive singular Irish collective would also support the central theorization presented from the findings (as detailed in the subsequent chapters).

Claims made by individuals who would ordinarily self-subscribe as Irish in relation to the historical seem portrayed as associated with genealogical links or ancestral roots to an Irish past. The abstract idea of claiming a purity of 'Irish' identity based on the protracted longevity of familial lineage is brought into question in relation to the perceived accuracy of Irish historicity by some participants. This occurs within a focus group discussion with primarily younger participants and together with the rejection of sport, Irish sport or otherwise, as being essential to claims of a person's *Irishness*, which highlight a noteworthy dimension in cross-analysis. An assumption might be made whereby conservatism appears as allied with older age and creativity

[83] In reference to the work by Giddens (1991) entitled, *Modernity and Self-identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*.

with youth. Loaded with this supposition would be the view that, with age, greater knowledge has been attained, thus providing greater excuse for conservative values. Evidenced from the focus group discussions, however, seems to be the inference that some of the younger participants were in fact not only more open to alternative understandings of *Irishness* but were also contemplative and evaluative in a deconstructive manner of aspects pertaining to *Irishness* which were conversed about by older participants, such as supposed unambiguous histories and sport allegiance. Conceivably it may be also indicative of a shift in pedagogy in recent years that takes, for example, a more revisionist approach to historical education and challenges what Doherty (1996: 325*f.*) two decades ago describes as,

> the inculcation of the belief in the inherent spirituality of the Irish people, which constituted the dominant motif in school instruction, supplemented by a more sophisticated popular historical consciousness than has usually been allowed…the point to be emphasised here is that the purposefulness of Irish popular thought, as instanced by the teaching of History, defies the categories prescribed for it by intellectuals, and has produced a variegated cultural milieu in which the political substratum nestles comfortably.

It is worth mentioning that gaeilgóir students, who likely value highly Irish language and nationhood, appear to display a level of cynicism towards *Irishness* that is based on identifying with fixed historical understandings associated with revivalism and Irish sports fanaticism. Inferred also is that the younger participants may recognise how the acquirement of Irish language is not so as to strengthen mythical racial distinctiveness but rather more simply an appreciation of cultural distinctiveness which can be valued inclusively. The younger participants seem to have transcended the post-colonial backlash that viewed the restoration of Irish language as a means to counter 'the extinction of the Irish race' as described in Seanad Debates on 18th March, 1943 (Doherty, 1996: 336). Their views give the appearance of having removed an assumed intrinsicism of Irish language and other traits and characteristics. Such views seem to correspond more closely with subjectivist views. Such self-reflective and critical evaluation of past and present also lean towards cosmopolitanism or, conceivably even, 'a cosmopolitan patriotism' as described by Appiah (1997: 618). These young participants show signs of appreciating locality and community while transcending local attachments at the same time. This aspect of

patriotism and cosmopolitanism is afforded more in-depth attention in the section below.

Conversation on history provides the means to express an understanding of societal change. The comprehension of social change is expressed and conceived of based on a form of progress that seems conceptualized similarly to natural evolutionary processes. Instead of what Giddens (1990: 10) describes as a 'loss of a belief in "progress"' which is underlain by 'the dissolution of "narratives" of history' some participants' responses seem to rely on historical narratives for the restoration of the belief in social evolutionary "advancement". Such views appear to correspond with social evolutionism which supposes that '"history" can be told in terms of a "story line" which imposes an orderly picture upon the jumble of human happenings' (Giddens, 1990: 5). To a degree such cognitive positioning may then limit participants' perceptions on discontinuities that may have occurred and occur in both modernity and late-modernity/postmodernity. There is some reservation whereby viewing societal change as an innate process comparable to evolution, rapid change in the fabric of society due to migration is seen either as a potentially detrimental abnormality, or as an inevitable process with the prospect of creating positive societal advancements. The impression is that the former detracts from serious, existential concerns (discussed below), while the latter indicates a sense of blind acceptance or fatalism, which adds to the depreciation of self-agency and sense of autonomy. The evolutionary narrative, that expresses perpetual progression, may hint as to why participants generally did not allude to more dysfunctional social phenomena relating to environmental degradation, political totalitarianism/empire and military power with the industrialization of military intervention and war (McNeill, 1982; McNeill, 1983; Giddens, 1990: 9). Such views seem to assume diachronic links or temporal progress to be integrally linked to civilizing processes or the advancement of civility.

Participants distinguish 'the other' by claiming how 'the other' lacks historical connection with the Irish nation across a continuum of measures. Such a deficit is perceived to lessen one's claims of *Irishness*. In the practice of creating such differentiations, although it is not perceived as being necessarily divisive, the suggested inference is that it may unwittingly exacerbate social stratification.[84] Here

[84] The relationship between ethnic identity and social-economic status is not a wholly new phenomenon. In modern Ireland the predominantly bipolar religious denominational axis distinguished

what is identified is that representations of history not only help to define the social identities of peoples but how groups relate to other peoples both in the context of international politics and with regard to internal diversity (Liu and Hilton, 2005: 537). Important too, is the observed relationship between representations of history in creating, maintaining and shaping an individual's identity, combined with their social standing.

A certain bias emerged across several of the focus group discussions whereby negative sentiments are expressed towards American claims to *Irishness* based on ancient genealogical links to Ireland. This would seem inconsistent with previous justifications that allow one-self to claim *Irishness*. Such a contradiction appears to be less as the need to construct one's own identity within a fixed historical past and more as a confirmation of a strategic manoeuvre; as means to fulfil the desire to preserve a social arrangement that benefits the self. Furthermore claiming *Irishness* through the connection to an ancient past comes across as a means to elevate and project the status of "native" above all other people. Such elevation of nativeness seems constructed even by participants who may not ordinarily associate themselves with supposed progressive or conservative inclinations, although typically it would more aptly complement leanings towards the latter. Accordingly, Gilroy (1990: 166) refers to the doggedly ethnocentric character of the desire and aspiration of leftist nationalists 'to produce a popular culture which the left can somehow orchestrate or even command…' and also raises issue with 'left nationalism and the statist conceptions of political change that bolster it'. Gilroy (1990: 166) continues by referring to the compounding of 'race', nation, culture and ethnicity and how such historiography creates a nativist impulse which 'represents a great intellectual weakness' particularly as far as 'the politics of racism are concerned.'

Participants' perceptions of more modern Irish history and views of pre- and post-colonial Ireland appear to negate responsibility and accountability for recognised past and persistent social problems. Ireland is portrayed as a juvenile nation that was and is inadequately equipped to deal with its own collective societal dilemmas.

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between Protestantism and Catholicism and was seen to have social significance for status inequality. During the 19th and 20th century religion was a key characteristic or ethnic determinant of an individual's identity, and labelling on religious grounds was starkly related to social position. Although inequalities have diminished, certainly in the Northern Irish context, differences remain (Coakley, 2002).

In the context of modern Irish history and post-colonial Ireland, and although unspoken, such negation could also be how Ireland distances itself from European colonialism. Conversely, such distancing may also neglect or even, through a process of historical amnesia, eradicate reflection and deliberation on intersecting ethno-religious and social divisions that culminated in the Rising and ensuing civil war. Furthermore, although a neutral state at the time of the Shoah Holocaust, a certain level of complicity was present. Although not a colonizing country like other European nations, nonetheless for Ireland also there would seem to be a 'silence about race today, its censoriousness, its denial. Race is an embarrassment. A family past that has passed, or must be made pass. Better that it not be mentioned, that it not have to be thought or thought about. Only it doesn't comply, it won't cooperate, it refuses to remain silent' (Goldberg, 2009). Perhaps such discomfiture which creates an abstinence from discussing race, and the fear of an alternative 'other', is leading to the regressive phenomenon of perverse views of race as expressed in explicit racist sentiments. The impression is that, as a juvenile state we are excused for knowing no better, or for lacking the socialization of civility and respect. Alternatively, or in combination, silence about race would seem not be a localized phenomenon. Lentin (2008: 488) conveys the view in *Europe and the Silence about Race* that, '…contemporary, western, postcolonial societies are imbricated in an idea of their constitutive nature as tolerant and democratic and, by association, non-racist or indeed anti-racist.' In accordance with this the overall argument presented is that, 'the silence about race in Europe allows European states to declare themselves non-racist, or even anti-racist, while at the same time continuing to imply an inherent European superiority, which determines both international relationships and relationships with those seen as "in but not of Europe" within its domestic spheres' (Lentin, 2008: 487).

History as a subject and discipline is shown to have been discussed in several focus groups. The impression from the participants' discussions is that a sound and comprehensive knowledge of Irish history is considered indispensable in order to become fully integrated into Irish society and self-subscribe as Irish.

The discrepancy between being an 'Irish' citizen and being 'Irish', when brought to the fore, apparently emphasizes a form of labelling as a process of differentiation. The resultant effect may be the projection of an unequal onus or responsibility on the new

'Irish' citizen rather than the "native" Irish. Nonetheless, with regard to the notion of being "native" Irish as Inglis (2008: 41) writes,

> there has never been a unique, essential way of being Irish. But this has not stopped people – and the groups and organizations to which they belong – from trying to make out that there are core characteristics to being Irish. These range from being born in Ireland, to having Irish ancestors, speaking the Irish language, listening to Irish music, playing gaelic sports, supporting the nationalist struggle in the North and so forth.

Overall, what may be observed, with shifting dynamics because of increased variation amongst the Irish population due to migratory flows and globalization, is the occurrence of a more contemporary form of distinction. The possibility is that the process of labelling and differentiating has moved from less explicit culturally assumed habits to the superficial visual, which is racialized. Within the continuum of liquid modernity instead of a more enlightened approach whereby the very conceptual notion of belonging is challenged and changed, simply the rules of belonging may have partially shifted. Such an adjustment to the rules maintains inequitable power dynamics which are an undercurrent of Irish society. In this context a seemingly invariable outcome in the dynamics of populations and power is the socio-psychological disposition towards making superior/inferior distinctions. In this Irish context, amongst the participants researched, it is suggestive of a propensity towards in-group exclusionary practices.

When comparing the agency to call oneself Irish with the less tangible sense of feeling Irish, what becomes evident is the contrast between self-subscribing as Irish and being externally recognised and accepted as Irish by other people. Bound to self-identification as Irish is an emotional association with Ireland that is often expressed as an affection or affinity with the country, and a perceived Irish way of life.

The importance of cultural exposure over a temporal period in several of the focus group discussions appears to shift the focus away from either *jus soli* (birthright) or *jus sanguinis* (bloodline) kinship based arguments. What may seem incongruent from this is that although participants did seem orientated towards temporal duration and residency rather than birthright or bloodline descent affiliation and Irish citizenship acquisition, as further elaborated below, participants' understandings of ethnicity

imply that ‘mere residence within a locality is not in itself enough to generate local solidarity’ (Tovey *et al.*, 1989: 9). An ostensibly plausible antidote to this dilemma is in the classificatory distinction that is made between ‘being Irish’ and ‘being an Irish citizen’.

Being both Americanized and Irish through exposure to Irish cultural norms, would seem discordant with an idealized view of being ‘Irish’ which somewhat rejects the possibility of expressing identity hybridity. In this instance, there is the preclusion of the notion of cultural hybridization associated with cosmopolitan patriotism as detailed by Appiah (1997: 619). Furthermore, the expression of anti-American sentiment does not seem to complement the self-recognition of the adoption of perceived American traits, attitudes, values and behaviours by assumed members of Irish society.

The contestable issue between performing alternative cultural practices and expressing feelings of affinity for Ireland would seem to show an imbalance towards privileging individuals deemed as members of the Irish collective. Linking in with this is the rejection of notions of hybrid identities, whereby a paradox is highlighted between expressing an affinity with a given locality or country while also maintaining an appreciation of self-expression that may have stemmed from cultural exposure elsewhere. Again, in reference to above, this seems to challenge Appiah’s (1997) desire for cultural hybridization within cosmopolitan patriotism and the sentiment expressed by Appiah (1997: 622) who suggests that, ‘there is no reason to suppose that everybody in this complex, ever-mutating world will find their affinities and their passions focused on a single place.’

This might lead to the inclination to ask the question, *why might society discourage understanding self-identification in such a manner?* An assumption might be because there is the association between historical events, such as the 1916 Rising and the Irish civil war, and nationalism fuelled by over-romanticization and sentimentality. Past conflict is conflated with the perception of excess emotion yet as detailed above, affection for and affinity with a perceived ethnic tradition seem based on the arousal of feelings. Emotive feelings based on a sense of connectedness to the past can also be seen as woven into the present and also future projections, as described by Tovey *et al.* (1989: 6):

> Whatever cultural elements emerge to symbolize identity, over time these develop an accretion of additional meanings which amplify the group's representation of itself to itself and others. They become the bearers of an interpretation of historical continuity – myths of origin or a shared historical past; they come to stand for a much broader, explicit or implicit ethos and set of aspirations for the future of the people. Thus, they both define the epitome of peoplehood and express in a multidimensional way a common consciousness of kind.

The importance of history, of who can claim linkage to Irish history (as described above), define it and self-subscribe as associated with it, both physically and emotionally, outwardly these are the modes by which power is exerted to maintain control into the future. It is the means by which descendent rises over those without claim to ancestry.

Progressing on from this is the examination of the construction of ethnicity, race and Irish national identity. The homogeneity of Irish physiological traits, in particular pale and 'white' skinned, is seen to be dependent on a specific understanding of a Celtic historical epoch, as well as phenotypically determined via intergenerational exposure to Irish climatic conditions. Thus, as the word phenology implies, the external environmental habitat and climate are seen to be functional in affecting an Irish person's physical disposition. Such recognised phenotypes would seem to be so imbedded in historical ancestry, they have become naturalized to equate to an imagined purity of *Irishness*.

The requirement to conform so as to be recognised as a member within the dominant norm of society, as perceived by participants, is related to an assimilation/integrationist perspective in contrast to multiculturalism or interculturalism. Yet, directly in contradiction to above, where imagined purity is based on inherited and an evolved bodily condition, physiological traits are not deemed to be of importance within the process of inscribing *Irishness* onto a person. Of equal importance, though with a slightly dissimilar nuance, commonality rather than conformity is focused upon in a separate focus group discussion. As referred to above, according to one participant, one gains an appreciation of commonality within

the collective through temporal exposure and "growing up in Ireland" (Adrian), which can be assumed as progression towards social cohesion.

Nonetheless, additional evidence does emerge which reaffirms a more fixed view on the homogeneity of *Irishness* based on a supposed essential nature of a person. With the further disentanglement of the notion of race, revealed somewhat conflicts with the stance above which seems to value extrinsic factors. Thus fittingly, the notion of "race" as an imaginary is juxtaposed against "race" as a reality. The notion of the Irish as a discrete "race" is assumed and implied in several focus group discussions, yet may not be shared by all of the participants within each of the groups. Either way, in the social and public sense observed is how perceived reality and the perceived imaginary domain become mechanisms of limited representation rather than an exercise of minds that provides individuals with 'freedom of personality' and self-determination (Cornell, 1998: 33; Acampora, 2007: 67). Instead of the imaginary domain activating what Acampora (2007: 67) describes as 'the possibility for change - insofar as different forms of existence emerge as options to pursue or reject, and hence the imaginary domain facilitates a more rigorous exercise of our agency' - the collectivized racialized imaginary domain of *Irishness* produces the opposite, by restraining agency both of ourselves and 'others'. If phenotypical *Irishness*, as described above, is imagined but constructed externally at a social level to then become absorbed and internalized at the individual level, then there may well be a moral obligation for a democratic society, purporting to uphold the values of freedom, to undermine and destabilize such notions of race built on false consciousness.

Two noteworthy aspects of discourse become evident from analysis of the focus group discussions. First, as discussed in chapter eight, attention is given to the use of third person plural pronouns which might be perceived as a language mechanism to intentionally differentiate in a derogatory or subordinating manner. Instead what is inferred is that it is a mechanism to stress the importance of cultural exposure through the experiential in being or becoming 'Irish'. Secondly, in certain instances although comments are made which seem to ironically portray *Irishness* as being solely bound to intrinsic bloodline descent, they could be indicative of a perceived view of a dominant attitude that may prevail within broader Irish society below the surface.

A form of reification fallacy pertaining to the compounding of both ethnic and racial distinctions is identified and exposed in conversations. Participants refer to generalized descriptions of a stereotypical understanding of a unique Irish way of life, yet almost simultaneously recognise the difficulty in describing a distinctively authentic Irish ethnicity. Suggested from the analysis is the implication that participants have not, in a reflexive manner, made the realization that what might be at the core of the question relates to their own sense of perceived *Irishness*. As compounded by participants, ethno-racial first impressions seem to be related to socio-psychological processes that occur with the ascription of identity. More traditional understandings of the concept of ethnicity appear unveiled, particularly as perceived by older participants. Their interpretations of ethnicity complement Geertz's (1973) description whereby ethnicity as a social identifier can be perceived based on attachments and sentiments that are primordial; 'assumed "givens" – of social existence' (Geertz, 1973: 259). Comprehending ethnicity in such a manner implies 'that ethnic attachments are temporal (rudimentary, unresponsive to change) and even biological (innate, almost genetic)' (Tovey *et al.*, 1989: 5). Such presuppositions are seen to become embedded in an individual's consciousness with greater effect when the collective group accentuates the absoluteness of singular identity distinctions rather than conceiving identities as fluid and adaptable. Through conceiving *Irishness* in restrictive terms and an inability to imagine more varied ethno-racial arrangements, an ethno-racial bind occurs within the consciousness of participants that is based on the reification fallacy.

Overall, comprehension of the Irish social fabric is achieved through a compounding of intrinsic notions of evolutionary change within the context of history (as is further expounded below), together with the reification of ethno-racial distinctions, ethnocentrisms, as well as the belief that society can be and is shaped by environmental externalities. Such an interpretation of social order and potential societal progress conveys a level of illogicality. It suggests that through social interaction, between members of the dominant normative group within Irish society, a blending occurs to facilitate transmission of racial/ethnocentric and conversely anti-essentialist values which merge within the psyche of individuals. On the one hand, through a process of social construction, the socio-psychological condition perpetuates ethnocentric biases; while on the other hand, there is a cognisant

understanding that such ideas of the inherent are actually quite fragile, baseless and abstract. Nonetheless acceptance, reconciliation and the condoning of such conditioning are reached because there is the fear (as introduced in the previous findings chapters) and belief that any undermining would entail the destabilization of the status quo, or an alteration of the social fabric which ultimately would be personally counter-beneficial for the increasingly egocentric individualized Irish person.

In contrast to above, cultural change, as well as the loss of what is deemed traditional (also discussed below), seem to be perceived as caused by processes associated with globalization, rather than the arrival of 'newcomers' and the perceived ethno-racial heterogenization of the Irish collective. Cultural appropriation and absorption through media exposure and consumption patterns are described as determined and influenced primarily by the global powers of Anglophone America and Britain. Notions of traditional Ireland are portrayed as having greater self-sustainability whereas current existence appears to be more susceptible to and reliant on external forces operating transnationally.

There seems to be acceptance of the inevitability of social change, yet the biological concept of evolution is transposed onto notions of social progression. Evolutionary ideas provide elucidation and create a sense of linear social advancement with underlying racist/ethnocentric rationalizations. Additionally, race and diversity are related to people's perceived sense of anxiety with respect to societal transformation. Fear is shown to stem from anxiety that is based on an abstract or notional idea that immigration will overwhelm the Irish population. However, quintessentially the fear is discriminatory. Conversely it is conjectured that for the 'newcomer' their fear would be more accentuated and that this may be compounded with the burden of the fear of rejection from the 'natives'. This dimension of fear can be seen in relation to egocentrism and social Darwinism, which are referenced in chapter eight and further developed in the subsequent section.

With changing times and the perceived re-imagination of *Irishness* within broader contemporary society, a critical neglect has been the recognition and inclusion of peoples of varying physiological dispositions, in particular people of skin colour other than 'white'. This would seem tenuous because, as evidenced, it is recognised that

notions of a pureness in *Irishness* are quite unfounded, yet participants maintain reliance on antiquated stereotypical notions of 'Irish' identity when discussing *Irishness* in ethno-racial terms. It is understood that such a clash in conceptualising *Irishness*, instead of finding greater resolution, has been reinforced by legislative changes in the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum with the erosion of *jus soli* based citizenship acquisition, even while, the reality is that Irish society continues to diversify.

Discussions within the groups draw attention to and focus on the recognised benefits the welfare state model affords the population. The Irish welfare state model is contrasted with perceptions of the US model and is discerned to be superior. Apparent from the conversation is that simply the expression of interest in supposed Irish culture would be sufficient to deem an individual satisfactorily entitled to state welfare provisions. Participants' sense of the benefits of the welfare state, with particular regard to perceived rights and responsibilities, highlight that notions of freedom associated with membership of the nation state are conversely intertwined with law abiding acts. The idealized person seems to be perceived as a law abiding citizen, dutiful and responsible to the nation state and in return is afforded rights.

The notion of "free" provisions, as an emergent theme within several conversations, is contested by participants and counterarguments are presented, suggestive of either direct or generalized reciprocity through taxation. This cost-benefit rationale seems to provide justification for a sense of resentment towards 'others' who are 'newcomers' that appear to chiefly profit from the benefits of the welfare state. New and alternative forms of socio-cultural and potential economic capital are reasoned as most aptly acquired through processes of returnee migration rather than through integration of diverse 'newcomers'.

The welfare state is perceived as relatively flawed, with apparent disapproval being directed by participants both towards the mismanagement of state policies and practices, as well as towards citizens potentially abusing the features of the welfare state model across the strata of Irish society. Institutional structural flaws in the provision of welfare are seen to excuse corrupt values, attitudes and behaviours exhibited by members of the public, who are deemed as simply acquiring their basic rights and entitlements. Where there is cultural recognition of misuse of provisions,

'insider' social capital may be beneficial for individuals in acquiring welfare provisions, whereas for 'outsiders' navigating such an imperfect system becomes a more arduous task. In a similar vein, the dichotomous comparison appears to be made by participants between the deserving "us", versus, the potentially undeserving "them". What results from the politics of "us" and "them" is the (fabricated) creation of a perceived binary division which eradicates opportunity for adequate anti-racist and anti-classist intervention.

The impression is that, having contributed through the process of generalized reciprocity, the 'insider' who originates within is deemed as more eligible for state provisions. The quintessential view, as detailed in the rudimentary anecdotal account of man's ownership of property and the carving up of nature/land, which could be read as natural resources, is outwardly challenged as anthropocentric (as discussed further below). Instead of divisions along national, racial and ethnic lines, it is apparently counter-posed by one participant that in actuality it is the land or nature that owns "us" humans, the implication being that anthropocentric world views inexorably make subhuman racism a given (as further contended in the following section).

The informative anecdote detailed in chapter 9.1 supports the view that the perceived issues associated with immigration and the perception of the welfare model are flawed, which all feed into justifications towards the reconfiguration of the socio-democratic welfare state model. What was neglected or under discussed however, was a shift in governance towards neo-liberal policies. In fact some views may, inadvertently or not, endorse a neo-liberalist governmentality. Although the participants generally express an appreciation of the welfare model, certain reservations expressed may well fit into a shift towards neo-liberal authority. Perhaps unbeknownst to most participants such an agenda seeks the transformation towards a new politics and new social order by delinking social problems from socio-structural factors and alternatively links problems to individual-subjective categories. According to Lemke (2001: 13), from a Foucauldian perspective, neo-liberal governmentality is based on a logic that attempts to render the social domain economic and justifies a reduction in welfare state services and security systems to the increasing emphasis on individual responsibility and personal care.

Conservatism is seen both at the level of the individual, as a characteristic of *Irishness*, and also within political organization. The erosion of the traditional (as mentioned above), either in the form of state organization or societally, seems to be perceived more complexly as a condition challenging conservatism, while also reinforcing existent inequitable access to provisions. There also appears to be the ostensible recognition of a shift from welfare based provisions towards a more neo-liberalist approach. As noted predominantly by female participants, the more economising approach of state policy would seem to create financial binds which stifle altruism at an individual level, yet absurdly within *ordo-liberal* rationale, the impression is that care is often outsourced to charitable bodies and organizations that depend on the charity of individual people and personages.

The example provided of the choice to partake in voluntary work would seem also to be associated with altruistic acts. The implication is that the erosion of the welfare state and the shift towards neo-liberal governance apparently produces financial binds that negatively affect the opportunity and ability of individuals to be as altruistic as they might ordinarily wish to be. Inferred from this it would seem acts of altruism have become less a choice and more a matter of personal circumstance.

From the perspective of the participants within the Belfast focus group discussion, it seems that both moral and political conservatism are distinguished and discussed in a critical manner. Although *Irishness* is perceived as having adopted a value system that simultaneously accommodates conservatism and aspires to uphold notions of equality, such incompatibility may more aptly reflect neo-conservative principles.

The institutions of Catholicism seem to be comprehended historically to have been substitutes for provisions which the state had otherwise left neglected. From this, it would appear that contemporary privatization simply shifts responsibility from religious orders to corporations, thus the (more secular) intermediary state maintains its negation of social obligations leaving status quo structures unchallenged.

Conservatism is explicitly discussed, specific to the importance of nation state governance and the management of mechanisms of migration controls (as discussed above). Within one focus group in particular, notions of ostensibly "free" movement are described as being governed by the demands of transnational capitalism and regional economic instabilities, rather than uncompelled migration.

The outcomes of the 2004 ICR are deliberated on and perceived as a more regressive and conservative step based on racism and national chauvinism. Further to this, because the amendment exerts inordinate exclusion of people from developing regions, it is perceived as the manifestation of an "us" versus "them" dichotomy (as detailed above) imbedded in the supreme level of Irish nation state legislation. One justification for more stringent controls on the migration of the non-European, or non-developed world, 'other' seems based on the perceived threat to security. In contrast, negative opinion of intra-European migration that is based on economic supply and demand would seem perceived as irrational antipathy. What emerges is that perceptions and positions of opinion may shift but maintain balance through their presentation in discourse as rational pragmatisms.

In the late 1980s Kirby (1988: 8) wrote of '…the evidence of a conservative backlash' triggered by economic and social problems of a decade of economic recession and emigration. Whereas it has not been an uncommon phenomenon throughout the history of modernity for nation states and peoples to slip into a more regressive stance politically when the nation state suffers shock from economic failures, the inference must not be made that economic stagnation is the principal cause of increased conservatism. As supported by the viewpoints expressed by some of the participants, regressive nationalistic sentiment can occur due to racism and protectionism even during a period of relative economic prosperity.

The culmination of the findings is the juxtaposition of rational or irrational pragmatisms within predilections towards neo-liberal cognisance and governance. Such leanings are comprehended as the means to justify a supposed logical rationale of moral disregard. Perceptions of rational pragmatism are in fact quite irrational, nonetheless they justify the unjustifiable basis for dominant advancement and elevation. Described in the subsequent section is a more thorough and in-depth explanation of the concept being advanced in this thesis, namely perceived rational pragmatism.

Although some participants express an acceptance of citizenship acquisition through both bloodline descent and through temporal exposure to Irish society, there is an underlying absoluteness held by some, which resolutely supports legislative norms associated with the passing of the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum. Awareness of

dominant media representations, now discredited, during the 2004 ICR campaign is evidenced, nonetheless maintenance of a view complementing such a position still seems to be espoused by several participants; instead, the perceived rational pragmatist position surfaces, based on deterrence and economic necessity.

The historical imposition of English language, as well as its dominant usage over Irish language in the contemporary context, is to an extent indicative of juxtaposed ir/rational pragmatism. This is particularly evident when framed in parallel with analysis of discourse that definitively looks to differentiate *Irishness* from 'otherness' or presents the assimilationist position which obliges the migrant 'other' to acquire the dominant language in Ireland, namely English. Historically, in the context of British colonialism, exposure to and acquisition of the English language appears to be expressed as being a social benefit for Ireland. What may also be interpreted is a predestined condition between inferior/superior cultures, which unavoidably demands that the status quo remain dominant, thus excusing the demand for integration through assimilation rather than mediated through interculturalism or an inter-lingual society.

The consecutive example of perceived rational pragmatism detailed relates to consumerism. Propensities towards buying Irish produce and prioritizing the Irish over 'others' is perceived as rationally pragmatic as it is cyclical and thus benefits development within the nation state. A financially cyclical production/consumption process is assumed logically favourable for the improved quality of life of recognised members of the Irish collective. However, the impression is that such perceived rational pragmatism based on consumption patterns that are individualistic and neglect to reflect upon altruism which would share development and resources with 'others' less affluent, the welcoming of asylum seekers or external development aid. Furthermore, such perceptions based on assumed consumption patterns fail to truly consider resource acquirement beyond the nation state and paint an abstracted picture blind from the existent processes of globalization.

When the alternative concept of non-governance is proposed with the promotion of true freedom of movement, it appears to be rebuked and challenged as irrational and entirely impractical. The contrary argument implying a more natural process of population equilibrium would seem to complement posthumanist inclinations (as discussed earlier in relation to anthropocentrism and conserving migration controls).

The rational pragmatist perspective is one that argues for emigration, cultural appropriation and returnee migration, instead of affording more lenient access to the 'newcomer' and incorporating the 'newcomer' whose alternative cultural repertoires will bring potential enrichment. In this way, stricter status quo management of subjective value and selective cultural appropriation are kept internalized within the Irish collective. Also notable is that Irish state governance seems to be depicted as weak or undeveloped due to either the natural progression of regionalism, or the lack of political competency towards self-management and self-determination (linking in with perceptions of flawed governance discussed above).

The apparent view of participants is that European dominance has manifested political and legal power to obligate the Irish state to enact laws of equality. However, such imposition would imply the disavowal of autonomy and thus could paradoxically be interpreted as undemocratic. It is implied that Ireland is caught in a double-bind between state inefficiency and pan-European autocracy. It would seem that along with such autocratic governance is the risk that '…ethnocentrism may be enhanced amidst the cultural order of a new Europe in which chauvinistic concern with ethnic particularity has been rehabilitated even as the political and economic integration of nation states proceeds' (Gilroy, 1990: 116).

Some participants allude to the lack of political leverage at the Irish nation state level when operating within the global financial system, thus implying an inescapable bind that is determining Ireland's diminished control through transnationalism. Discussion on the Irish economy in the context of global financial capitalism suggested that participants seem to perceive Ireland in a state of dependency on processes of globalization and transnational corporate contribution. This creates a sense of powerlessness and futility in making any alternative societal level abstractions: there seems to be an inability to conceive of a balanced approach to sovereignty and interdependency, where the former is overly isolationist and is perceived as running the risk of stalling prosperity and enhanced quality of life. A sentiment that seems persistent – although the social, political and economic landscapes have changed since then – complements what De Paor (1979: 23) wrote in the late 1970s where it is claimed that 'it is not possible to build a wall, paper or otherwise, around Ireland and to maintain here a kind of frugal republican virtue, while the outside world indulges in an orgy of greedy affluence'.

10.3 Perceived rational pragmatism

This subsequent section, which postulates the idea of perceived rational pragmatism, is considered as an addition to the body of knowledge on socio-psychological theory.[85] Consistent with the Grounded Theoretical approach employed the concept of perceived rational pragmatism emerges from analysis of the empirical data that has been detailed heretofore. Within the limitations of this thesis, the endeavour at this point is to deconstruct the concept focusing on examples in discourse that emerge within the focus group discussions presented, with respect to Kantian concepts of the self. By detailing such, the ambition is to clarify and justify the argument, with the intention that it might evoke thought and consideration on the implications of such a theorization, in the context of contemporary Irish society and beyond.

For Kant the concept of personhood, as rational agency reliant on the formation of the self, is a form of understanding the rational dispositions of the self. Thus, personhood in Kantian terms is based on the 'conception of the self as rationally unified consciousness' (Piper, 1991: 2). From this point, empirical evidence or *a posteriori* knowledge is presented to substantiate how consciously perceived rationality manifests itself and how it may become defective when relegated under pragmatisms that are perceived in/accurately to be *a priori* based. Ordinarily the assumption is that *a priori* constructions of knowledge produce logical truths and also transcendental verity. However, the rationale of pragmatism need not always initiate such directionality. Under an exacting doctrine of pragmatism, the inverse could just as easily be substantiated such that the course of supposed knowledge production becomes destructive.

What has thus emerged is the cognitive construction of rational pragmatism as perceived by individuals both at the liminal level and subconsciously. Nonetheless, the self justifies their pragmatic stance through the edifice of a supposed rationality that is not subjectively perceived by discrete individuals; rather it is specifically experienced through social exposure. This materializes when the self finds reaffirmation that collectivizes and makes real the rationality of pragmatism. In this way the expressions that are formed within a perceived rational pragmatic frame of

[85] As presented in the methodology section, the methodological approach is also deemed to be an addition to the body of knowledge, but in this case it is a supplementary to knowledge on contemporary principles of methodology.

consciousness are tested between individuals and are confirmed or rejected along two vectors that interact along a rational/irrational vector and a pragmatic/impractical vector and are, within the cognisance of persons, inseparable. A sense of rationality can thus be deferred below, or elevated above, its perceived practicality or impracticality.

Evidence detailed below presents the argument that within this current spatial and temporal frame, as indicated among some participants in twenty-first century Ireland, perceptions and views are determined predominantly by a process of pragmatism that then augments itself through cognitive constructions of rationality. This supposition is demonstrated by detailing participants' specific discussions on *Irishness*. Certain responses are revealed in relation to research on political and public discourse in the framing of the undeserving 'other' and legislative amendments made following the 2004 ICR, as documented in the introductory chapters. These very social processes, and their resulting outcomes, provide the basis for evidencing that the causation of perceived rational pragmatism may be societally determined rather than the inverse, outward from the individual, at the psychological level.

Within liquid modernity, an external effect of manipulation and exposure to mythological notions reinforces notions along supposed pragmatic positions. The sense-perception within current spacetime would seem to position perceived rationality as the exclusive constitutive measure by which knowledge is deemed rational. With simultaneity, these are validated through social interaction and discourse, which act to shape an individual's consciousness and impose pragmatism as a dominant thought process that looks to justify a specific rationale. As such perceived notions may lack autonomous contemplation, they may occur without necessarily having a comprehensive rational foundational basis. Instead of avowing principle, morality and/or ethics perceived rational pragmatism becomes a mechanism that circumvents such considerations by playing rationality off pragmatism, or the inverse. In effect, the reinforcement and affirmation of specifically pragmatically driven perceived rationalities renders an ostensibly moral position cogent for the individual. This is likely to occurs because, as Piper (1991: 2) elucidates 'internal rational coherence is necessary for preserving a unified and rationally integrated self.'

It is the paradox of living within the social environment while striving for individualism which breeds the conditions for perceived rational pragmatism. Perceived rationality allows the individual to identify themselves as being able to self-constitute with a level of autonomy and freewill while also being subsumed under culture and society. When the self is positioned in relation to others it would seem to necessitate a loss of control. To maintain rational coherence within the self and between others such forfeiture is justified with supposedly pragmatic arguments.

In this sense morality, as realized through a level of autonomous self-constitutionality, becomes relegated below, neither moral nor immoral but 'non-moral' actions. 'Non-moral' practices occur in order to preserve the interests of the self in a heteronomous world that primarily drives self-interest. Such 'non-moral' practices are achieved because reasoned thought is apprehended on superficial pragmatic grounds. The external imposition of a societal structure dominated by the singular economic rationale together with apparent pragmatisms thus inhibits the range of perceptions attained by the intertwining of conceptualization and intuition. Instead of allowing for a multiplicity of data to inform the organization and synthesis of a perceived rational position, the process of pragmatism within an aesthetic frame negates the burden of more fully-rounded and complete cognition. What was "out of sight, out of mind" becomes "out of mind, out of sight", both in the hypothetical and literal sense. Pragmatisms disavow morality from thought, or conscience from cognisance, by generating a pseudo-rational condition through which the self falsely perceives themselves as entirely sensible and reasoned actors within the context of their surroundings and situation.

Piper (1991: 3) argues that xenophobia may be 'a self-protective reaction to violation of one's empirical conception of people, and involves a cognitive failure to apply the transcendent concept of personhood consistently across all relevant cases.' The fear of something foreign, strange or different from the self is dependent on how one self-identifies. By socially constructing identifications of the self, through processes discussed above, a pseudo-rationality then becomes created. This is because perceived rational pragmatisms are heteronomous yet appear to the self as autonomous. What occurs is a form of mind trickery to defraud oneself of morality, while seemingly having the conscious knowhow to think with morality.

Thus what becomes evident at the core of this condition is a skewed function of classification and/or categorization under such a state. Essentially the Kantian thesis of rationalism proposes that in order to have a conscious experience, the prerequisite is that one must be able to make sense of the experience by identifying properties of it '…in terms of a set of coherent concepts that structure our experience' (Piper, 1991: 5). As mentioned above, the cognitive organization that is deemed a requisite of existing as a rationally unified subject relies on both fundamental categories (*a priori* transcendental concepts of the self) and categories based on experience (*a posteriori* gained knowledge). As Hicks (2004: 34) explains, 'the knowing subject is something: its processes are causal and definite, and they shape the subject's awareness.'

Within the context of identity formation and identity ascription, of primary interest is how the relational aspect of categorization effects the shaping of perceived identities. To register a conscious experience means that the construction of identifiable properties is relational to previous experiences that obey processes of categorization, grouping and classification. It would seem a logical necessity for knowledge, in all its subjectivities, to still be reliant on learnt perceptions and perceived truths of identity. It is thus through subjectivity that one makes their own sense of empirical knowledge. Kant (1781: 400), first elucidated in the eighteenth century the doctrine of Transcendental Idealism as,

> everything in space and time, and therefore all objects of experience possible to us, are nothing but appearances, that is, mere representations; and that these, as presented to us – as extended bodies, or as a series of changes – have no self-subsistent existence apart from human thought.

In the context of perceived rational pragmatism, logics exist both external and internal to the self, such that the distinction between *a priori* and *a posteriori* overlap but in a chaotic manner to both fix and unfix simultaneously a reason of logic attained through a supposed pragmatic rationale. While pragmatism spurs the freeing of the conception, rationality looks to bind it to senses of morality. Perceived rational pragmatism as pragmatic rationalism might seem reiterative less the value of perception, but it is this renunciation of subjective positioning that allows the subject to perceive their positioning as universally logical but fundamentally wanting of morality. Thoughts and will towards the universality of the individual's situation are

evaded through purposeful, though perhaps not so explicitly conscious, whitewashing by pragmatism. The pragmatic component allows the coherent ordering of experience and rational conception, while neglecting already attained knowledge which might be conflicted or indicate an inherent illogicality underlying such reasoned pragmatism.

In the context of the exclusion of 'the other', transcendental concepts, which are abstractions from experience, inform the judgement of the subject, yet such a process of cognizance is merely perceived and has been radically influenced by external empiricism that is imposed on the subject though dominant forms of social interaction (e.g. media representation and public discourse). These pseudo-transcendental concepts inform the individual and trouble transcendent ideas or more abstract and learnt ideals of personhood and human behaviour. If such transcendent ideas produce unified morality, universal reason and ideal humanity, then pseudo-transcendental concepts intrude on such unified morality or humanity. Thus, perceived comprehensive judgement is (re)constructed by false abstractions from self-experience and imposed empiricism. Pseudo-transcendentally constructed consciousness imposes on a person's self-consciousness, whose requisite is unified thinking selfhood, to inflict debilitation of further transcendent cognisance. In addition, the assigning of personhood through transcendent processes is neglected through the process of self-conceived pragmatism.

In substantiation of this theorization, evidence is presented below that interrelates three dimensions, first, the analysis of conversations presented in the previous results and findings chapters, secondly, the historicity in relation to *Irishness* discussed in chapter two, and, finally, the legislative predicament following the passing of the two thousand and four Citizenship referendum and subsequent acts.

In chapter nine, findings that emerge centring on the concept Perceived Rational Pragmatism are presented. Being 'Irish' and becoming 'Irish', or an Irish citizen, are framed within the prism of bloodline descent (jus sanguinis citizenship), birthright affiliation (jus soli citizenship), or thirdly, spatiotemporal association with Ireland. Although contradictory to the general view presented whereby participants stressed the importance of physical attachment with Ireland over a specific longevity of time, participants expressed responses which were resolutely supportive of the amendments made with the ratification of the 2005 Irish Citizenship Referendum. Not only is this

symptomatic of a more conservative view towards the formalized aspect of being and becoming 'Irish', it may also reflect a pragmatic attitude towards law and order of the conventional status quo.

Though not limited to the examples below, rational pragmatism as it is perceived by participants in the focus group discussions becomes conspicuous within several noteworthy themes. What becomes apparent in the operation of perceived rational pragmatism is less a zero-sum positioning and more an orientation that accepts multiple conditions and is context dependent. For instance, Irish language and English language, Assimilation and Multiculturalism, Open access and closed entry. The overarching prerequisite circumstance that determines whichever stance is taken would seem almost invariably determined within the basis of perceived rational pragmatism.

10.3.1 The language of Irish and English

Over two decades ago Tovey *et al.* (1989: 3) described the juxtaposition between perceptions of and belief in the value of Irish language amongst the majority of Irish people, as well as the erosion and progressive marginalization of the actual use and maintenance of what is deemed by Tovey *et al.* (1989) as an affirmative quality of Irish collective identity. Evidence is presented in relation to language acquisition and the perceived rational pragmatist view that the attainment of English, and assumed maintenance as the dominant language, is perhaps paramount to economic prosperity and advancement. Within contemporary times examples of the recognised relegation of Irish language in the pursuit of *ordo-liberal* economic advancement within post-colonial Ireland are provided in several focus group discussions. From discussion on the role of immediate family in the transmission of core values across generations, it can be inferred from one snippet of conversation that adopting Irish language becomes a means of differentiation or 'self-othering'. Thus particularly evident in the Belfast focus group discussion, there is also evidence of the re-appropriation of Irish language from what was deemed a degenerative characteristic for centuries of colonial rule, which goes beyond mere language parallelism. So although Tovey *et al.* (1989) proposed the desire to reverse such a trend, i.e. to promote and revitalize Irish language use, what would seem to have materialized since the 1980s would be a more

nuanced rational pragmatist approach to acquisition and use of Irish language. This is whereby its adoption and learning are encouraged as a form of cultural capital in order to distinguish or to make distinguished. In both instances there is a perceived rational pragmatic approach taken but also in both are purposeful processes of exclusion rather than inclusion. As such actions based on what is perceived as rationally pragmatic perform as a mechanism to justify, or ostensibly nullify one's own self exclusionary practices.

10.3.2 Assimilation and Multiculturalism

Nonetheless, perceived rational pragmatism may not always manifest itself in terms of exclusion. It may also promote inclusion, but such inclusionary forms seem ultimately to be justified on egocentric or self-preservationist grounds, through the inexorable course of societal change. To provide further substantiation for such a proposition and to bolster the argument that this is socially reproduced, an example comparing the emphasis on assimilationist rationale rather than interculturalist leanings will be specified. What transpires from several discussions on assimilation, integration, interculturalism and multiculturalism is ultimately a reversion towards conformity within what is apparently, singularly stated, "the community". As much as there is the expectation to be 'Irish' by contributing through community participation, there is the elevated expectation on the "new Irish" to assimilate more into this notional culturally homogenous society. The justification for such an assimilationist approach is given along the lines of perceived rational pragmatism in relation to language acquisition, as discussed above, but also in order "to fit in"(Michael). This in itself may project itself as simply reasonable speak, yet when this notion of assimilation or "fitting in" is understood within the dimension of a cognisant understanding of social hierarchy and contemporary neo-liberal order, [86] within the conception of perceived rational pragmatism, "to fit in" is less about the benefits it may bestow on the 'other' and more about knowing that fitting in for the "new Irish" is about subordination and ethnocentric preferment. Perceived rational pragmatism in this sense is a means by which one convinces oneself and 'others', both collectively and individually, of

[86] Please refer to Carroll's remarks in relation to education in Chapter 9.2 It could be plausible to infer that a similar understanding of conformity is also viewed in relation to the maintenance of status quo more generally.

expressions of compassion while simultaneously being realist. Though superficially dissimilar, when assimilationist leanings are sometimes challenged within some discussions, when seemingly more progressive stances are taken in relation to the promotion of diversity and multiculturalism, in certain instances these are justified under a social Darwinist rationale, which is not at all too distant from contrived thinking on eugenics. What becomes apparent, is less a benign desire to share and perhaps empathize through a diversification of society, and more a way of thinking that comprehends diversity in egocentric or pseudo-ethnocentric terms for either self-benefit or collective 'insider' benefit. The combining of both assimilationist / integrationist stances, in certain instances, with more multiculturalist / interculturalist propensities would seem to aptly fit the notion of manoeuvring under the pretences of perceived rational pragmatism.

10.3.3 Egocentrism, Altruism – empathy and sympathy

As introduced above, egocentrism is a pronounced dimension that emerges from various focus group discussions and amongst several participants. At times it subtly projects itself as both a form a self-centring, but vitally for this thesis it occurs in combination with sympathy that is explicitly Irish-centric. In contrast, there is a noticeable absence of empathy from some participants. Evidence of this is observable in the process of minoritization within discussions on either anecdotal accounts that are personal or specific to kin relatives, presented as Irish, whereby sympathy is sought in the context of the self or of 'the other' as Irish. Correspondingly, participants refer to and discuss the historical context of Irish emigration and assumed general hardship that is perceived to have been imposed on the Irish populace. Yet in both of these instances neither sympathy, in relation to the experienced processes of minoritization having been abroad, nor empathy, even in reference to historical circumstance, is developed as a means to justify altruistic tendencies towards the excluded 'other'. If anything, altruism as it seems to emerge is exclusively self-centred, familial-centric or Irish-ethnocentric. What is troubling about this is that it is doubly flawed. First, such a position is oxymoronic when at the roots of altruistic sentiments or selflessness is basically a self-centred core. Secondly, such expressions of altruism are ethnocentrically determined by what is deemed to be 'Irish'. Thus as

discussed throughout, if narrow definitions of *Irishness* are maintained through notions that are fundamentally essentialist, and altruism forms predominantly in the fashion described above, then humanistic favouritisms become subhuman. Again the latter would seem to be either in-humane or quintessentially racist.

10.3.4 Open Access and Closed Entry

This progresses to another characteristic of perceived rational pragmatism, racism under the guise of participants' opinions on conceptual access to what is deemed Irish, as well as actual physical access to Ireland via legislative ruling on migration and existent migratory control regimes.

Within the findings the younger participants in particular challenge the notion of a pure Irish ethnicity, race and so forth. Similarly, although some participants place value on genealogical connections with Ireland, there is general acknowledgement of the continuous yet mutable nature of the Irish fabric that comes with societal change. Also evidenced are expressions of orientation away from the *jus sanguinis*, and even *jus soli* based citizenship and instead the accentuation of the importance of having a spatio-temporal association with Irish society. The combination of these positions implicitly undermines the constitutional changes made in the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum.

Nonetheless, in direct conflict with this is evidence relating to, amongst other aspects, the purposeful differentiation between being 'Irish' and being an 'Irish' citizen. Following from participants' responses to defining *Irishness*, which are more supportive of a comprehension of identity as fluid, mutable and less labile, the expectation would have been that through reflection on participants' own responses to *Irishness* the participants would provide expressions supportive of greater fluidity in both access to the nation state itself and the conceptualization of being 'Irish'. However, participants revert back to a rejection of fluidity both in access to the nation state itself and also in being deemed as Irish. Multiple justifications are discussed, such as the modernization of the state as a member of the European Union, fear based on the perceived mass influx of 'newcomers', or the threat to security, or, an ostensible moral concern for the health and welfare of pregnant 'newcomers'. This becomes evident when analysing responses of participants when confronted with the

outcomes of the referendum or when participants express a relatively comprehensive understanding of the irregularities associated with the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum. The fact that the legislative changes from the 2004 ICR are left uncontested would seem purposeful; even when justified along seemingly pragmatic grounds such positioning would seem to complement the perceived rational pragmatist perspective. Opinions and viewpoints of participants provide pragmatic arguments that are rationalized based on their perceptions as they are presented in conversation, which seem highly subjective and unsubstantiated. Moreover, despite participants being cognisant that their perceptions may be in actuality baseless, or lacking well considered moral foundations, they choose to manoeuver to uphold certain perspectives nonetheless.

An inversion of a sense of morality dictating economic choices occurs in relation to consumption. On the one hand, consuming Irish produce and goods is justified in the national interest, while recognition of everyday lifestyle choices of many is individualistic and seems to disregard "the bigger picture" (Christine). This would seem to imply the valuing of economic rewards over more moralistic orientations. Economic necessity is argued on multiple grounds, not just consumption but also those discussed hereto now. Reverting to the subject of access and migration, ultimately economics is argued by a participant to justify more restrictive access to Ireland or becoming 'Irish'. Compulsions towards economic necessity are used as means to leverage moral stances and thus create justification of opinions under perceived rational pragmatism. Similarly, one participant's anecdotal account provides opinion based on perceived rational pragmatism that argues for restrictive access because of the desire to preserve their rightful ownership of their home or society. When unveiled, while arguments based on perceived rational pragmatisms attempt to portray well-reasoned moral vis-à-vis economic justifications, they are in fact utilized as a means of reinforcing egotistic and self-preservationist positions. Furthermore, there is the projection of viewpoints that complement what Goldberg (2009) refers to as 'continental nativism', whereby there is the Irish and European preference of 'native' Europeans. Thus importantly, the discrepancy in differentiating once 'outsiders' somewhat welcome to become part of the Irish fabric (i.e. European nationals), and 'outsiders' deemed as less or undeserving would seem to have racist undertones. One can surmise that participants within several of the focus group

discussions express a shared psychic mechanism that employs perceived rational pragmatism as an attempt to conceal racist undertones, therefore acting to reinforce egotistic and self-preservationist positions.

Divergent from what has been discussed hitherto is evidence which is overtly empathetic, though sometimes negated or seeming to be relatively minimal either in the context within each of the discussions or amongst the discussions overall. Examples of the emergence of empathic considerations are presented with specific regard to the racialized 'other', and in relation to the perceived lack of welfare provisions in developing countries. Also, though slightly more nuanced, empathetic reflections come to the fore pertaining to a counterargument which refers to the hypocrisy of the Irish historically relying on and benefiting from emigration, "but yet we can't get our heads around these people coming to us could do great things for us" (Emmet). Evidenced is a clear contradiction of the notion that the constitutional amendments have a reasonable justification, when a participant claims that the 2004 ICR was "a racist referendum" (Tony). Also in contestation of the idea of ownership and preservation from 'outsiders', Conlaoch, insightfully contends that "the land actually owns us, and we serve the land" (Conlaoch). This presents a shift in consciousness and conscience, which is less egocentric or human-centric leaning towards a more posthumanist collective and self-understanding. Combined with this, Conlaoch presents the argument, in relation to neoliberalism and the management of migration, that the nation state should have no authority to "cause harm to living beings" (Conlaoch). Conlaoch rejects the association with the nation state that constructs a system which privileges certain peoples over 'others', through limitations, boundaries and frontiers as it not only permits human suffering but becomes agential in inflicting suffering.

The overall picture is of the wilful relationship between the Irish subject and the Irish nation state, whereby the Irish subject seeks to protect their collectivized egocentric position by mandating the authority of the Irish nation state to make certain exclusions; one most blatant mandate being the passing of the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum and fixing into constitutional law greater onus on *jus sanguinis* descent. Such protectionism is at the cost of a rejection of not only the perceived 'other' but their humanity and ultimately a denial of a more posthumanist understanding of one's own existence both spatially and temporally. It seems to be a means of clinging onto,

somewhat blindly, a sense of immortality if not through familial bloodline, then through the imagined Irish collective. If being eternal becomes increasingly elusive, at least the illusory notion of racial superiority and desire for perpetuation is accomplished through the exclusionary policies and practices of both the Irish nation state and the European Union, manifested in part through their concerted border migration regime.

The association between racism and immortality is no recent phenomenon. As Crew (1998: 16) affirms, Peukert's argument is that the nineteenth-century old dilemma of understanding death and im/mortality was resolved through the logic of science and reason based on racism rather than theology. Crew (1998: 16) writes how, under such scientifically rational logic, attaining the eternal is shifted from the body of the self, to the eugenic "body" of the "Volk", or societal collective. 'Although each individual must eventually die, the healthy race could survive. But while racism promised immortality for each individual's "healthy" genes, it also advocated the "elimination" of the "unfit" carriers of "deficient genes" (Crew, 1992: 322*f.*; 1998: 16). The historical significance is that what emerged out of the Weimar Republic in the early twentieth century was a Germany underpinned by such social racism with 'hopes of national reawakening and fears of national extinction' (Peukert, 1991: 277).

As Rodby (2009: 35) writes,

> The system of immortality found in the totalitarian ideology creates a national or supranational organic collective which is defined and defended biologically. The continuation of the whole depends on the reliable and continual reproduction of the individuals within the collective, hence the extraordinary level of concern in matters that would ordinarily be considered personal and private. Anything that constitutes a threat to the collective reproductive system of the totalitarian movement constitutes a threat to collective immortality.

Although such notions are considered a constituent of authoritarian belief, as the evidence suggests, such concepts are not unique to such oppressive dogma but can be found simmering within the logic and conscience of modern man existing collectively within a supposedly egalitarian based democratic nation state. For both Peukert and Crew, 'social racism' is considered to have been produced by the 'human sciences' themselves, existing as a constituent of 'the pathologies of modernity' (Crew, 1992).

What has changed, however, is the basic difference that individuals within *ordo-liberal* society perceive of themselves as rational liberated beings whereas, according to Randel (1975: 19),

> supporters of totalitarian ideas believe that man does not, in most cases, act on rational grounds. They maintain that, in general, due to factors of emotion or personality, he is not master of his own actions thus he cannot control them. Therefore, he must be led or, in some way, have his course of action illuminated by what is conceived to be a better group of men.

In an individuated, self-concerned society, the attempt at immortalization within *ordo-liberalism* complements the perception of oneself as rationally pragmatic, for 'Death is the scandal, the ultimate humiliation of reason' (Beilharz, 2000: 148). Though we are powerless to 'know' death, thinking from a perceived rational pragmatic position permits the construction of racisms in order to immortalize, and thus provides a sense of resolution for the *ordo-liberalist* modern human condition. It falsely elevates human status as masters of our universe, fully knowing subjects, operating within reason.

What has been charted up until this point is the exposure of a subtle socio-psychological mechanism, theorized as perceived rational pragmatism that materializes within conversation on the collective self, in this case the Irish and *Irishness*, and the assumed 'other'. It is revealed to be complementary to Arendt's (1964) views on the banality of evil and is contained within a logic associated with modernity. As Lentin (2008: 489) claims, 'racism in Europe following the Nazi *Shoah* has predominantly been interpreted as a particularity of the Hitlerian regime, an aberration from European politics rather than, as several scholars such as Hannah Arendt (1966) and Zygmunt Bauman (1989) have argued, a possibility contained within the idea of modernity itself'. The trajectory of arguments above has led to the consideration of immortality and racism which is seen as embedded within classical modernity itself, and now is even more accentuated with the rise of *ordo-liberalism* within a globalising, yet regressive nationalistic sentiment.

10.4 Concluding on perceived *Irishness*

The centrality of socially constructed ethno-racial distinctions and creations of 'otherness', in relation to perceived *Irishness*, should not be underestimated. Conceptions of 'Irish' identity that are dependent on such distinctions may be a cause of, if not throw fuel on the fire of a propensity towards a dominant culture of values, attitudes and behaviours reliant on the socio-psychologically fabricated process of perceived rational pragmatism. Thus, in order to break such a tautological bind so as to advance normatively, not only a more truly knowledgeable society but a more compassionate society, both processes ought to be unequivocally confronted and counteracted.

Prior to the commencement of this study it might have been assumed that with liquid modernity; mobility, migration, globalization, transnationalism and communication new, more labile and fluid perception and conceptions of self-identification might be occurring in Ireland. These might debase more racialized constructions of 'Irish' identity, or even support more-circumspective understandings of *Irishness* itself. Nonetheless, the findings imply that participants tend to rely on reconstructing 'Irish' identity in a bind with the predicament of reproducing essentialized and racial notions of *Irishness*. The theorization above even suggests that participants resort to expressing a mechanism of 'perceived rational pragmatism' so as to justify and convince themselves of a foundational basis for the criteria for 'Irish' identity that may be the antithesis of their very own self-knowledge.

An expectation might be that the effects of globalization on demographics, communications and information exchange have meant that time and space, both physically and cognitively are less bound by locality or place (Appadurai, 1996; Hannerz, 1996; Inglis, 2009) such that people's sense of national identification and belonging may have become troubled. A prospect might be that there would be a regressive shift towards nationalistic tendencies of exclusion, its converse the diminishment of national identity and the emergence of a new form of identification. Such a decline might have the effect of convergence across humanity with a heightened or empathic concern for the unknown 'other' and desires for greater inclusion. However, participants expressed more nuanced, complex and often conflicting views on identity formation which through conversation sophisticatedly

manoeuvred between these three scenarios. Overall the resultant effect is that of an underlying conservative and traditionalist nature which seeks status quo preservation, particularly in the context of access to citizenship and the very real and figurative aspect of citizenship legislation.

Moreover, the supposed basic rational justification is repeatedly reinforced through processes of constructing ethno-racial distinctions. In this twenty-first century, is it not high time to finally discard such Hobbesian theoretical foundations whereby, as Arendt (1958: 157) warns, 'humanity could carry the endless process of capital and power accumulation through to its logical end in self-destruction'? Surely it is about time to reject,

> naturalist ideologies which hold nations to be tribes, separated from each other by nature, without any connection whatever, unconscious of the solidarity of mankind and having in common only the instinct for self-preservation which man shares with the animal world. If the idea of humanity, of which the most conclusive symbol is the common origin of the human species, is no longer valid, then nothing is more plausible than a theory according to which brown, yellow, or black races are descended from other species of apes than the white race, and that all together are predestined by nature to war against each other until they have disappeared from the face of the earth…
>
> Racism may indeed carry out the doom of the Western world and, for that matter, of the whole of human civilization. When Russians have become Slavs, when Frenchmen have assumed the role of commanders of a *force noire*, when Englishmen have turned into "white men," as already for a disastrous spell all Germans became Aryans, then this change will itself signify the end of Western man. For no matter what learned scientists may say, race is, politically speaking, not the beginning of humanity but its end, not the origin of peoples but their decay, not the natural birth of man but his unnatural death (Arendt, 1958: 157).

Our humanity, along with the transformative capacity of new knowledges, obliges us to finally transcend the unnatural condition of thinking in essentialized terms. Our conscience endows us with the hypothetical capacity to replace sub-humanist falsities, by means of posthumanist thinking, and to avail of knowledge production ethically and holistically. Only by doing so will it help overcome the impending challenges of

our time, such as the conflict of war, ecological degradation, resource depletion, population growth and changing climatic conditions.

10.4.1 Future research opportunities

To give a schematic review of the depth and latitude of Irish identity, notwithstanding its complexity and perplexity, would be to exceed the limitations of this research. For this reason, this study confines discussion of perceived *Irishness* to that displayed by participants through an in-depth and comprehensive analysis. Some features of Irish identity are dealt with only cursorily, or have even been omitted. Furthermore, this thesis engages only concisely with certain themes of perceived *Irishness* which are central to unravelling an understanding of Irish identity but which can either be easily studied elsewhere or would diverge from the empiricism built into the methodological process.

Irrespective of the debate about the Celticness of Irish origins, which Nash (2006: 27) refers to as 'an internal postcolonial process of rethinking history, belonging and identity', it would seem paramount that the reassessment of historical notions of 'Irish' identity, from a post-modernist standpoint, would complement the justification of a more inclusive approach to Irish immigration policies. Particularly in an ever more interdependent and globalizing world which creates dramatic social change, it would seem that more flexibility in defining and modifying existing conceptions of the collective self is a prerequisite of any contemporary society (Wight, 2006: 84). Thus, one clear avenue of future research would be historical studies that expand on historical revisionist narratives, with particular focus on dynamics of migration and cultural adaptation.

It would seem pertinent from the findings and inferences discussed hereto, that the theoretical proposition on perceived rational pragmatism be explored and scrutinized further, both in the Irish context and elsewhere. Exploration within alternative jurisdictions, such as Europe, or further afield, would lend to the view that such theorization is not a unique phenomenon of the Irish collective, but rather it may be a collective socio-psychological condition inherent to *ordo-liberalist* thinking irrespective of locality. In this regard, it would be beneficial to attempt to construct and visualize the more substantial conditions that either encourage or alleviate

tendencies towards perceived rational pragmatism. How the framing of positions may differ based on perceived rational pragmatic grounds, or not, within and between diasporas' networks, migrant groups, commuters, hybrid persons, etcetera, would also prove fruitful. Although worthy of focused research in itself such studies could be incorporated into broader research on the socially (re)constructed nature of identity more generally.

In making a comparative analysis, potentially at the pan-European level or beyond, it would be productive to construct a quantitative means of acquiring data that adopts an enquiry specific to perceived rational pragmatism, in addition to wide-ranging themes of identity. Such an investigation could be pursued in an intersectional manner, triangulating legislative and policy changes with individuals' tendencies towards perceived rational pragmatism and externalities that may impact on both, such as media representation, indebtedness, employment, and so on.

From the outset it is acknowledged that a beneficial aspect of this research is not only its contribution to knowledge theory but also, through the methodological process and its findings, how it can advocate change in social reality (Agassi, 1990: 2). To this end, a further direction for this research would be its dissemination, not only within academic circles, but also to the broader public. The construction and synthesis of information, as well as complementary audio-visual material gives appeal to this research for future projects, such as public exhibitions and installations.

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Appendix 1.1: Request for participants for focus group discussions

Request for your participation in a discussion on Irish identity

Yaqoub BouAynaya
PhD Candidate within the Sociology Department, Trinity College Dublin
Research Student Associate at the Institute for International Integration Studies, TCD
087-987-4004
bouaynyj@tcd.ie

Are you free to watch a multimedia presentation & participate in a discussion on Irish identity?

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I am writing to you because I would like to request your participation in a project I am conducting, which asks the question: what is *Irishness* in contemporary society? As part of my research studies at Trinity College Dublin I am looking for a number of participants to take part in a viewing of a multimedia presentation and discussion on the subject of identity.

I require about 5 participants for the discussion and would be grateful if you / your organization / club / working group would consider participating. The duration of the viewing and discussion is expected to last about 2 hours.

I would be flexible with times and locations and would be able to come to you rather then expect you to come to me. If required, I would also be able to organize a suitable venue and bring the necessary equipment, such as a projector for the viewing and discussion. Light refreshments would also be provided.

I would be extremely grateful if you contacted me either via email or telephone to discuss this request further.

If you require any further details, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Yaqoub BouAynaya

Appendix 1.2: Pre - focus group discussion informed consent details

Hello.

Thank you for coming this evening and participating in this project.

This research is about 'Irish' Identity and is attempting to explore people's perceptions of *Irishness*.

It is part of my PhD research within the Sociology Department of Trinity College Dublin.

I am studying this topic as I feel it is particularly relevant to contemporary Ireland and the position Ireland finds itself in at present. I personally am of the view that reassessing national identity within society is a pertinent precursor to moving Ireland in a positive direction into the future.

The research I am doing with you will be used to provide data which will be analysed and then written up as results, concluded on and published in my dissertation. At this stage I am unsure if any of the information will be used beyond this but if in future, it is deemed worthy of submission for academic publication, may I presume there would be no objections from you as participants.

I would like to ask each of you for informed consent. Preferably I would like to have some simple details of yours, which are not 100% necessary but will help me understand the demographic makeup of the participants. I do not intend to include your names in my dissertation, nor would I provide names to any third party. However, my I ask if any anonymity is required or is it ok for me to use all the details you provide me in my research? Also, may I ask if, I have the right to publish and disseminate the results of the research?

If it is ok with everyone, I would like to record all of the discussion and take some notes. The information from these will be used for my research but the actual recorded audio material will not be used in any other component of the research. If at any stage you would like to opt out of this research project, please be sure to say.
I would also like to take some portrait photographs at the end of the discussion. If you do not wish me to take your photograph please let me know then.

Post-hoc Viewing

If any of you at this stage feel they are unhappy having provided information thus far, please be sure to inform me.

Appendix 1.3: Focus group discussion participant factsheet

Participant Factsheet **Location:** **Date:**

All information provided is at the complete discretion of the participant. There is no obligation to fully complete all sections of this form. If anonymity is required please do not write your name.
(I do not expect to use participants' names in my dissertation but providing your name will be helpful for me in collating the data)
Please also sign your name providing me with the right to publish and disseminate the results of the information you provide on this sheet and the information during the discussion.

Name:	Age:	Gender:	Nationality:	Profession:	Contact (email/tel.)
……... Signed:					
……... Signed:					
……... Signed:					
……... Signed:					
……... Signed:					
……... Signed:					
……... Signed:					

Appendix 1.4: Focus group discussion pre- and post-viewing questions

Focus Group Discussion Questions

Pre-viewing Questions for Participants:

Ethnicity:

1/ what are the characteristics of *Irishness*?
2/ how would you describe a distinctive Irish ethnicity? (way of life, society)

Identity:

3/ what does it mean to be 'Irish'? (Elicit if being born in Ireland is essential)
4/ How do you personally identify with *Irishness*?

Citizenship:

5/ what are the criteria for being 'Irish'? (Elicit if Irish decent is essential)
6/ who is entitled to be an 'Irish' citizen?

Post-viewing Questions for Participants:

A/ having viewed the presentation, have you any comments you would like to make?

B/ do you have any additional outlook from what you said prior to viewing the presentation?

C/ what makes someone Irish?

D/ what is the difference between being Irish and being an 'Irish' citizen, do you think?

E/ of those interviewed, two people were born in Ireland and two were not, do you think being born in Ireland is an essential criterion for being 'Irish', why/why not?

F/ of those interviewed, one person has no link by descent to Ireland and one person has mixed descent. Do you think having Irish decent is an essential criterion for being 'Irish', Why/why not?

G/ how can someone become 'Irish'?

Reveal that the information I provided has been switched
(Elicit what that reveals about participant's presumptions about Identity)

Appendix 1.5: Focus group discussion additional post-viewing questions

Additional questions (AQ) developed that were informed by the Preliminary Phase / pilot study.

1. *Universal and democracy based on liberal multiculturalism*

a) How would you describe "liberal democracy"? (or liberal and democracy)

b) What are your opinions of multiculturalism?

c) **How do you see European governance in relation to Irish governance?**

2. *The criteria for Irish citizenship*

a) What helps ground you or what might disturb your sense of identity?

b) Please describe if and how you feel influenced by things around you, media, etc.?

c) How would you allocate citizenship? (taking into consideration the multimedia presentation viewed)

3. *Mythical representations of Irishness*

a) Do you know about the outcomes of the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum?

b) If so, what is your opinion of them?

c) Are you aware of other legislation that affects access to the provisions of the state (such as the Habitual Residency Condition), if so, please tell me about them?

4. Autonomous and progressive self-constitution

a) How might we re-imagine identity in the 21st Century?

b) How would you describe your sense of belonging?

c) Would you consider alternative understandings of citizenship and, if so, what might they be? (i.e. what would be the criteria?)

Appendix 1.6: Parental Consent Form

TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN
COLÁISTE NA TRÍONÓIDE
THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am a postgraduate student at Trinity College Dublin and I am conducting research relating to the topic of Irish identity. I am seeking consent from you as a parent or guardian of _____ that the aforementioned young person is permitted to participate in a focus group discussion on 'Irishness' in relation to the specific themes of identity, ethnicity and citizenship. The discussion would also entail the viewing of a short multimedia production.

The short multimedia production is of 4 one-to-one interviews with individuals who discuss their views on Irish identity. It relies on audio and visual means of communication in the form of interview recordings and photographic images of the individual interviewees. It is expected that the discussion and viewing of these interviews will last between 1.5 and 2 hours. The discussion will be audio recorded and notes by the researcher will also be taken.

Furthermore, though completely optional I would like to seek consent from you, as the parent/guardian to allow a portrait to be taken of the aforementioned young person. The photographs taken would subsequently be used only in conjunction with the dissemination of the research findings and may be published by the researcher or shown in an exhibition in the future. The portraits would also be provided to the participants.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. The aforementioned young person is under no obligation to participate in any or all of the research questions and can stop participating at any time. If they do stop they will not lose any benefits and will not harm their relationship with their affiliated organisation/group.

Though not a requirement, only if consent has been given will the aforementioned young person's name be used when data from this study is published. If not a pseudonym will be used instead and every effort will be made to keep the personal information confidential.

There are no physical or non-physical risks envisaged with this research.

It is reasonable to expect the benefits from this research will be that the young person will get the opportunity to voice their opinion on the topic of Irish identity, that they will get the opportunity to participate in such a project and that they will reflect positively on the outcomes of the discussion. However, there is no guarantee that the aforementioned young person will personally experience benefits from participating in this study.

If you require any further information, such as have any questions about the study or any would like to raise any issues please do not hesitate to contact me.

As parent / legal guardian, I authorize _____

1/	to become a participant in a focus group discussion	YES	NO
2/	to have their portrait taken as part of the research	YES	NO
3/	to have their name published as part of the research	YES	NO

Signed _____ Date _____

Thank you.

Yaqoub **bouaynyj@tcd.ie** **087-987-4004**

Table 1.1: Details of one-to-one interviewees

Date of Interview	Alias	Gender	Interview	Age
5th July 2011	Laura	Female	Interviewee 1	25-35
11th July 2011	Dijwar	Male	Interviewee 2	18-25
1st August 2011	Niamh	Female	Interviewee 3	18-25
11th July 2011	Kevin	Male	Interviewee 4	34-45

Table 1.2: Details of Preliminary Phase participants and discussions

Date of Discussion	Alias	Gender	Age	Nationality	Profession
9th August 2011 Kells (A)	Daithi	Male	36-45	Irish	Farmer & student
11th August 2011 Kells (B)	Sinead	Female	26-35	Irish	Teacher
	Bridget	Female	56-65	Irish	Housewife
	Hugh	Male	36-45	Irish	Job seeker
	Eimear	Female	>65	Irish	Housewife
	Desmond	Male	n/a	n/a	n/a
18th August 2011 Navan (C)	Eamon	Male	46-55	Irish	Tour guide
	Lorcan	Male	26-35	Irish	Farmer
23rd August 2011 Navan (D)	Mykola	Male	26-35	Ukrainian	Student

Table 1.3: Details of the Main Stage participants and discussions

Date and location of Discussion	Alias	Gender	Age	Nationality	Profession
11th March 2014 Belfast (E)	Tony	Male	36-45	Irish	Trade Unionist
	Molly	Female	36-45	Irish	Migrant Support Wroker
	Reagan	Female	46-55	Irish	Finance/Office Manager
24th March 2014 Limerick (F)	Adrian	Male	>65	Irish	-
	Charlie	Male	56-65	Irish	Retired
	Maebh	Female	56-65	Irish	Retired
	Dale	Male	46-55	Irish	Teacher
	Juliana	Female	26-35	Irish (UK born)	Homemaker
7th April 2014 Drumcondra (G)	Carroll	Female	46-55	Scottish/Irish	Community Development Worker
	Alana	Female	56-65	Irish	Operator
	Eddie	Male	>65	Irish	Retired Marketing Manager
	Ryan	Male	46-55	Irish	Self Employed
	Ciara	Female	46-55	Irish	Adult Literacy Tutor
20th May 2014 Naas (H)	Colin	Male	15-17	Irish	Student
	Liam	Male	15-17	Irish	Student
	Alan	Male	13-14	Irish	Student
	Glenn	Male	13-14	Irish	Student
	Eithne	Female	25-35	Irish	Youth Worker
28th May 2014 Leixlip (I)	Michael	Male	13-14	Irish	Student
	Kim	Female	13-14	Irish	Student
	Blathnaid	Female	13-14	Irish	Student
	Noel	Male	15-17	Irish	Student
29th July 2014 Clondalkin (J)	Kelsey	Female	18-25	Irish	Student
	Dana	Female	18-25	Irish	Student & restaurant staff
	Kathleen	Female	18-25	Irish	unemployed
	Brady	Male	18-25	Irish	Fitter
	Cillian	Male	18-25	Irish	Student
	Christine	Female	36-45	Irish	Youth Information Officer
15th August 2014 Drogheda (K)	Amy	Female	36-45	(Congo) French	Unemployed
	Irena	Female	36-45	Polish	Nurse
	Gerek	Male	36-45	Polish	Driver
	Emmanuel	Male	36-45	Togolese	Actor
	Luis	Male	56-65	Spanish	Pilot
	Toben	Male	-	Nigerian	Business
	Hubert	Male	46-55	French	Journalist
	Dillon	Male	-	South Africa	Retired journalist
	Diarmuid	Male	56-65	Irish	Retired Defence Forces
	Izabela	Female	36-45	Romanian	Teacher
	Rachel	Female	46-55	Nicoraguan	Assistant
	Busayo	Male	46-55	Nigerian	Missionary
	Ezinwa	Female	46-55	Nigerian	-
	Machie	Male	36-45	Nigerian	Event Management & business analyst
	Kasper	Male	46-55	Poland	-
	Karina	Female	26-35	Poland	Care Worker
26th Nov. & 2nd Dec. 2014 Coolock (L)	Tierney	Male	56-65	Irish	Tour guide / author / radio presenter
	Peadar	Male	66-75	Irish	Retired (industrial chemist)
	Aileen	Female	46-55	Irish	Radio producer
	Keela	Female	36-45	Irish	DJ / Radio
	Grainne	Female	26-35	Irish	Sports Officer / Media Publicity Officer
	Emmet	Male	46-55	Irish	Radio presenter / researcher / producer
	Conlaoch	Male	66-75	Éirenach	Retired teacher

Table 1.4: Key emergent themes from the Main Stage discussions

Perceived characteristics of *Irishness*	Perceptions of being 'Irish' & becoming 'Irish'	History, Law & Privilege	*Irishness*, economy & the state	Conversation Analysis & changing views
Family	Calling oneself Irish / feeling Irish	History	Welfare State (benefits)	Perception
Home	Feelings/emotions (as Irish)	Change (and history)	Education	Perspective
Clan	Affinity (want, feel, desire)	Colonialism / non-colonial	External cultural influence	Blurring historical reference points
Feud / Feudal	Pride	Law (abiding)	Migration (em-/im-)	Language use (1st, 2nd, 3rd person)
Grudge / Begrudge / belittlement	Becoming a citizen /v/ being Irish	Passport	Cultural relativism	Dominating conversation
Conflict / compromise	Insider/outsider/self-subscription	Privilege	Economy	Changing topic
Parochialism (parish) / Tribal	Temporal/Spatial (experience/exposure)	Anti-establishment	Work	Altering topic (slight)
Sport	Ethnicity	Anti-activist	Transnational Governance	Hidden information
Ritual	Getting the nuances	Travelling community (minority groups)	Globalization / financial capitalism	Absence of empathy
Community	Outsider view	Natural justice	Corporations	Ambivalent
Waning religion	Race	Borders	Americanization	Recognising ambiguity
Anti-puritan	Racism	Egalitarian / Fair	Consumerism/materialism	Egocentrism
Paganism	Race & Ethnicity - Inherent & Extrinsic	Hierarchy	Competitive (sport, etc.)	Collective-centrism***(ethnocentrism)
Spirituality	Colour	'Good' citizen / 'bad' citizen	Future	Adopting views of interviewees
Mythology	Subtle prejudice	Rights and responsibilities (r&r)	Technology	Defensive reactions to interviewees
Travel abroad	Being open-minded	Entitlement	National interest	Self/Family/Friends as reference
Generosity	Tolerance	Ownership*	Patriotism	Gender dynamics
Friendliness (outgoing, not too serious)	Adaptation	Belonging	Perceived rational pragmatism	Persistent interjections
Inquisitive / Intrusive	New Irish / New Ireland	Acceptance	Liberal dilemma	Media influence
Cultural superiority/Dominant position	Change (and diversity)	Assimilation	Neo-liberalism	History as reference
Hidden culture (-)	Advancement/progress	Integrate / participation	EU governance	Multimedia influence
Satire	Evolution	Effort	Agency	Anti-American sentiment
Social problems (suicide, etc.)	Fear (perceived danger)	Jus soli	Social amelioration	Changing views
Roots		*Jus sanguinis*	Rediscovery	Use of anecdotes
Heritage (old/new)		Citizenship	Freedom	Process of self-'othering'
Tradition		Hybrid identity	Force (enforcement /)	
Nostalgia		American Irish / diaspora		
Internal cultural influence		Cultural Capital / Social Entrepreneurs		
Conformity - performance to fit in		EU identity		
Authentic/Unique *Irishness*		Beyond EU id-entity		
Misconceptions		critique of system/law		
Drinking		Direct Provision		
Feeling rules / etiquette		Reimagining *Irishness*		
Physical affection				
Accents				
Language				
Physiological traits				
Nationalism				
North / South context (N-S context)				
Hard working				
Rural / Urban divide				
Generational				
The famous 'other'				