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“The Poles of the Western World”: The Representation of Eastern European Immigrants in Irish Newspapers

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1. Introduction

The title of this thesis, “The Poles of the Western World” is a quotation from the Polish dramatist and literary critic Adolf Nowaczynski (1867-1944), who took an interest in Irish culture and literature and once claimed that “All the Irish plays can be translated into Polish, change only the names and bring them to us and they will be lives taken from the Polish psyche” (cited in Merchant 62).

Nowaczynski’s remark is part of a 19th-century practice of comparing Ireland to the countries of Eastern Europe - most prominently Poland, but also Hungary or the Balkan states. Such comparisons emerged from the similarities of the political and cultural situation between those nations within the multi-ethnic empires that ruled Eastern Europe at the time and Ireland under British rule. Ireland had been incorporated into the United Kingdom in 1801; only six years after Poland had disappeared from the political maps of Europe after its final partition of 1795. For most of the 19th century, only four empires – the Austrian, the Prussian/German, the Russian and the Ottoman Empires – ruled the entire eastern half of the European continent. As regards religion, Poland offered the closest parallels to Ireland, as it was predominantly ruled by powerful neighbours that did not share its Catholic belief; only Galicia, the Austrian-ruled southern part of Poland, proved an exception.

The parallels between Ireland and Eastern Europe were, however, not only evident to Eastern European observers such as Nowaczynski: they also enjoyed popularity within Irish nationalist circles. One such instance is an 1863 reference to Ireland as “the Poland of the sea” (qtd. in Healy 107-108) from the newspaper *The Irish People*. Another example was Arthur Griffith’s book *The Resurrection of Hungary*, which was published in 1904 and which highlighted the Austro-Hungarian compromise as the model for an Anglo-Irish agreement. Irish nationalists often highlighted the suffering of Eastern European nations and the close parallels between their political situation and that of Ireland to attract attention with regard to their own oppression. In fact, the parallels were also recognised by Ireland’s imperial masters; however, not in the way the Irish would have wished. *The Times* of London agreed: “The Poles are the Irish of the continent” (qtd. in Davies 2006: 23). Yet, for the editors of the paper, the word Poland had a negative connotation and evoked associations of hot temper, unreasonable behaviour and a general inability to administer their own affairs. This English

perception of Poland is well in line with Larry Wolff's (1994) findings on the construction of Eastern Europe, which show that the East was constructed as Western Europe's "other" during the Enlightenment and that a discourse perpetuating negative stereotypes about Eastern Europe has been in operation ever since.

The political and cultural similarities between Ireland and certain parts of Eastern Europe also featured in Irish literature of the 19th century. Most notably Sheridan Le Fanu's *Camilla* (1872) and Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) have been described as being set in locations that show a remarkable resemblance with Ireland. Eastern Europe thus served as a metaphor for Ireland not only in politics but also in literature; references to Eastern Europe were employed as a way to criticise the political reality at home without explicitly naming it.

This study aims to evaluate how Eastern European immigrants to Ireland were portrayed in three Irish newspapers during the years following the enlargement of the European Union and to what extent the historical, cultural and religious similarities between Ireland and Eastern Europe, in particular Poland, continued to play a role in the discursive construction of these migrants. Were those historical similarities, which in the 19th century served mainly as a code for the discussion of domestic affairs, still relevant at the time when Eastern Europeans first entered into direct interaction with Irish people and how were Eastern European immigrants generally perceived?

To answer these questions, the methodology of content analysis has been applied to newspaper articles from three Irish broadsheet newspapers: *The Irish Times*, *The Irish News* and *The Sunday Independent*. The period of scrutiny was limited to the first two and a half years after the enlargement of the European Union and stretches from 1 May 2004 to 31 December 2006.

2. State of Research

As immigration from Eastern Europe to Ireland is a relatively recent phenomenon, the number of publications dedicated to it is therefore generally limited, and even smaller in the field of media analysis. Piaras Mac Éinri and Allen White (2008) offer an excellent overview of studies on immigration in their article “Immigration into the Republic of Ireland: A Bibliography of Recent Research”. They divide the literature available into nine categories under the headings “General Studies on Migration”, “Asylum and Refugee Studies”, “Labour Migration”, “Gender and Migration”, “Return Migration”, “Children and Migration”, “Minorities”, “Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination in Ireland” and “Citizenship, Integration and Multiculturalism”. Immigration to Ireland from the new EU member states is not included as a separate chapter, probably because few published sources exist on this topic. Mac Éinri and White point out that the publications listed under “Asylum and Refugee Studies” constitute the “largest body of research material carried out on immigration into Ireland so far. However, much of this research material dates from the late 1990s and early 2000s. Indeed only five (of a total of 100) references date from the last three years (i.e. after the EU enlargement and subsequent immigration of Eastern European labour migrants)” (159). Three years have passed since the publication of Mac Éinri and White’s article and the amount of material available has greatly improved since . However, most recent publications either focus on immigration in general or specialise on labour migration (e.g. McCormick 2008, Barret 2009, Barret and Bergin 2007, Suits 2009) or racism towards immigrants (e.g. Fanning 2007, 2009, Lentin 2007, Garner 2007). Only a modest number deals specifically with Eastern European immigrants or with the representation of immigrants in Irish media.

Recent studies of immigration to Ireland incorporate a variety of scholarly disciplines such as Critical Discourse Analysis, Sociology and Psychology. Rafael de Muñoz Bustillo and José Ignacio Antón compare the immigration experiences of Ireland, Spain and Greece with regard to those countries’ common histories as emigration countries. Muñoz Bustillo and Anton place their main focus on the demographic composition of the immigrant populations and their influence on economic performance in Spain, Ireland, and Greece. Fernando Prieto Ramos choses a similar approach. At the beginning of his book *Media & Migrants* (2004), he identifies the obvious similarities between recent Irish and Spanish experiences of immigration. Prieto Ramos approaches the topic by analysing newspaper articles from *The*

Irish Times, *The Irish Independent*, *El País* and *ABC* collected between 1990 and 2000. His objective is to investigate how migrants are depicted in the media and to expose power relations that influence those representations. Methodologically, the study combines elements of Critical Discourse Analysis and quantitative analysis, scrutinising strategies of reference, predication, argumentation and intertextuality in the articles selected. Prieto Ramos states that “the broader dimensions described for the whole period under scrutiny frame the more specific contextualisation required for the analysis of particular discursive realisations in particular situations. For this purpose, discourse fragments are interpreted according to the local intertextual and sociopolitical networks and functions signalled by their properties” (Prieto Ramos 24). Ultimately Prieto Ramos concludes that between 1990 and 2000, a redefinition of the collective European “self” and the “other” took place leading to the increasing convergence in Ireland and Spain of perceptions and discourses regarding international migration.

Brian Conway (2006) is another scholar who sought to describe the changes to Irish national identity in relation to the social, demographic and economic changes brought by immigration. His analysis is based on the scrutiny of editorial and opinion pieces from *The Irish Times* from 1996-2004. While Conway assumed that “given Ireland’s own emigration experience, its history of participation in imperial projects, and its treatment of indigenous minorities, [...] it would adopt an exclusive ethnic response to the presence of the migrant” (76), he found that inclusive narratives were invoked as well. Those narratives – the “historical duty argument” and the “myth of Saint Patrick” – were employed to encourage welcoming attitudes towards immigrants. The former describes an anti-racist stance that derives from the Irish experience of poverty and emigration a moral obligation to welcome those who seek refuge or better living conditions in Ireland; the latter is a rhetorical device that explicitly links the debate on immigration with the collective memory of Ireland’s patron saint, arguing that failing to welcome immigrants is a betrayal of the legacy of St. Patrick (84-87). Conway’s research, despite the fact that its period of scrutiny ends before the enlargement of the EU, carries broader implications for understanding Irish attitudes towards recent immigration to Ireland; therefore his findings will re-emerge in the analysis part of this paper.

Unlike Conway, who relied solely on data from *The Irish Times*, Haynes, Breen, and Devereux examined a wide range of Irish newspapers for their investigation into the media construction of asylum seekers and came to a less favourable conclusion about Irish attitudes towards immigrant populations. Haynes, Breen, and Devereux found that asylum seekers were almost exclusively portrayed negatively by the tabloid media and occasionally by broadsheet papers (Haynes, Breen, and Devereux 2005).

Colum Kenny approaches the interrelation between Irish media and the immigrant community from a different angle. In his article “Finding a Voice or Fitting in?” (2010), he examines the changes that occurred in the media landscape as a consequence of immigration. Many of those changes to the media were, however, hardly noticed by the majority of the population, because migrants often do not communicate through mainstream organisations. Kenny holds that there are “three principal ways in which the Irish media caters (sic) specifically for immigrants. Immigrants are the subject of reports in the mainstream media; some mainstream media also provide special supplements or programming for the immigrant population; immigrants enjoy discrete Irish publications in their own languages, either in print or online” (314). He concludes that immigrants are hardly ever found working for mainstream Irish media but have established their own ways of communication, just as Irish emigrants did during periods of immigration to the US and Britain. This marginalisation of immigrants within mainstream media, however, carries the risk that “migrants who depend for their information on these and on internet sites originating overseas will remain outsiders in Irish society” (319).

Two relevant studies were undertaken by Polish scholars who aimed to capture the Polish perspective on immigrant life in Ireland. Both conducted interviews with Polish immigrants asking them about their reasons for immigrating to Ireland, their living conditions in Ireland, their current salaries and future plans. Conducting her study shortly after the EU enlargement, Katarzyna Kropiwek (2006) found that while most immigrants arrived for economic reasons, a substantial part did so to gain life experience. These immigrants are often well-educated and have a good command of the English language; nevertheless, they usually work below their skill levels. Kropiwek also describes dense social networks between Polish people in Ireland and transnationally between Ireland and Poland, which facilitate chain migration.

In Agnieszka Nolka and Michal Nowosielski's study (2009) close transnational links were similarly highlighted as one of the characteristic features of Polish life in Ireland. Nolka and Nowosielski hold that modern forms of communication facilitate the ability of immigrant populations to maintain ties with friends and relatives at home. Moreover, inexpensive international transportation makes the decision to migrate a much smaller step than it has been in the past. For these reasons, "this new wave of intra-European migration is a fine example of transnationality" (44). Nolka and Nowosielski also found that interviewees viewed their interpersonal relationships in Ireland more favourably than those in Poland. For example, Polish immigrants experienced greater satisfaction in their relationships with children, in their relationships with neighbours, and in marital relationships in Ireland. Only in the category "satisfaction with relation with friends" did immigrants view the time before emigration more positively than their experience in Ireland. On the other hand, Polish immigrants were largely unsatisfied with health care, access to social welfare and possibilities of job promotion in Ireland.

Ireland was not the only country that experienced high numbers of immigration from the new EU member states – the United Kingdom had a similar experience. Barbara Korte, Eva Pirker and Sissy Helff (2001) edited a collection of essays under the title *Facing the East in the West*, which contains a variety of essays on Eastern European images in British literature. These essays range from Przemyslaw Wilk's Critical Discourse Analysis of images of Poles and Poland in the *Guardian* to Wolfgang Hochbruck, Elmo Feiten and Anja Tiedemann's reading of the Harry Potter series as conjuring up negatively connoted images of the East. Even though the collection's title refers explicitly to British literature, two of the essays are on Irish subjects. Michael McAteer examined the representation of Eastern Europe in Protestant Irish literature, and Martin Herrmann chose the film *Once* to explore Czech identity in, and in response to, the film.

What Korte et al. did on the subjects of British literature and cultural studies, Christophe Gillissen recommends for Ireland. He holds that Ireland's links with the East need further research and proposes a number of research topics for Irish scholars in his collection *Ireland – Looking East* (2010). His definition of the East is not limited to Eastern Europe, however, and includes Turkey, India and China. The most relevant contribution to Gillissen's

collection with regard to Eastern Europe is Catherine Piola's article on "Recent Eastern European Migration to Ireland and Demographic Change".

Next to media analysis, the second pillar of this paper is the perception of historical similarities between Ireland and Eastern Europe. A number of historians recently contributed to this debate, most notably Róisín Healy from the National University of Ireland, Galway. Healy published two relevant articles: "Inventing Eastern Europe in Ireland, 1848-1918" (2009) and "The View from the Margins: Ireland and Poland-Lithuania, 1698-1798" (2008). The former extends the theories of Larry Wolff and Maria Todorova on the construction of Eastern Europe in the mental map of the West to Irish studies. This article is dealt with in greater detail in Chapter 3.1. The latter article appeared as a contribution to Richard Unger's *Britain and Poland-Lithuania: Contact and Comparison from the Middle Ages to 1795*. Unlike the other articles in Unger's collection, which put the focus on similarities between Britain and Poland-Lithuania, Healy provides an alternative view on similarities between Ireland and Poland-Lithuania during the century before the partition of Poland and the Rebellion of the United Irishmen. As announced on her webpage, Róisín Healy is currently working on two book manuscripts exploring the themes of the aforementioned articles in closer detail. One of those forthcoming publications will run under the title "*Poland of the Sea: Irish Views of Poland, 1698-2003*". Healy chose as the starting point for this book the publication of Bernard Connor's *A History of Poland in 1698*, which was the first English-language account of Poland. Her book is going to deal with periods of particular interest in Polish affairs among Irish observers during the course of three centuries such as the Rebellion of 1798, the common victimhood of colonial aggression in the 19th century and, in the 20th century, on-going solidarity based on a common Catholic identity, which culminated when John Paul II, the first Polish pope, was elected in 1978.

The second book Healy is currently working on will carry the title *Intra-European Colonialism? Prussian Poland and Ireland, 1795-1918* and is a comparative analysis of the Irish situation under British rule and that of the Polish provinces under Prussian/German rule. She promises on her webpage to challenge historical assumptions about fundamental differences between Western and Eastern European political traditions by embracing the "concept of 'entangled histories' to emphasize the interconnectedness of both German and Polish history and British and Irish history". The main subjects of comparison in the book are

religion and language. On the one hand, Protestantism played an important role in Prussian/German as well as British Identity, as opposed to Catholicism in Poland and Ireland. On the other hand, Polish and Irish Gaelic and literature in these languages became two “rallying points for nationalist opposition” precisely because they were suppressed by the occupying powers.

While Healy’s forthcoming publications will place their focus on the historical similarities between Ireland and Poland, her article “Inventing Eastern Europe in Ireland, 1848-1918” also briefly explored similarities with Hungary. William O’Reilly and Andrea Penz (2006) made a more detailed contribution to this field of research comparing independence movements in Ireland and Hungary between 1780 and 1870. Particularly the perception of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 and the role it played as a model for Irish nationalists, most notably Arthur Griffith, are a central part of their analysis. O’Reilly and Penz not only point out the similarities, but also emphasise antagonistic features of the two movements such as the role of the aristocracy. In Hungary the aristocracy was generally in favour of national aspirations, while the Anglo-Irish nobility opposed independence or even Home Rule. Therefore, in Ireland the Catholic Church assumed a leading role in the independence movement, which was not the case in Hungary, where the chief issue was Magyar ethnicity.

In his review of O’Reilly and Penz’s book for the *Austrian History Yearbook 2009*, Garbor Vermes praises the authors for “correctly stating the valid analogy between two peoples struggling for freedom and emancipation within their respective imperial frameworks” (321). However, he criticises that they had fallen into the trap of depicting “juxtaposed case histories” (321) and established not enough links between the national histories of Ireland and Hungary. Moreover, Vermes points out that some of the promises made in the introduction of the book such as the deconstruction of national narratives were in no way fulfilled in the analytical part of the book.

Norman Davies (2006:24) points out that, even though of all Eastern European peoples the history and national character of the Poles is most frequently linked to that of the Irish, the history of Bohemia within the Austrian empire actually offers even closer parallels. Davies calls the Czechs “a relatively small nation, with no experience in modern statehood and vastly outnumbered in their lonely struggle against a single, relatively benign

empire” and wonders why “the temper of the Irish” is nevertheless closer to that of the Poles. Lisa Ferris contributes an interesting publication to this debate. Her doctoral dissertation *Irish Views on Old Austria and Austrian Views on the Irish Question* (2009) compares the imperial provinces of Ireland and Bohemia and juxtaposes the strategies, successes and failures of Irish and Czech nationalists. Examining the interest each nation showed for the situation of the other, Ferris points out that there existed “merely spasmodic sympathies at best of times, negation of nationhood aspiration at worst” (684). She stresses the religious division of the two nations. While the Czech people favoured Reformation and ultimately paid a terrible price for their convictions at the battle of the White Mountain in 1620, the Irish stood on the other side of the religious divide. Considering the legacy of the Wild Geese and subsequent Irish soldiers serving in continental armies, Irishmen were more likely to be found on the Austrian side of the battle line. Ferris ultimately concludes that it “appears that the geographical and confessional distance between Ireland and Bohemia at the time must have proved too great to allow satisfactory mutual monitoring of potentially supportive political movements, essentially nationalist and separatist in nature” (viii).

Another important publication that explores Ireland’s relationship with the East is Joseph Lennon’s *Irish Orientalism: A Literary and Intellectual History* (2004). Lennon describes how Irish Orientalism differed from that described by Edward Said because of Ireland’s position as a colony of the British Empire and the resulting similarities with other colonies like India and China. One of the sources Lennon cites to support his thesis of an alternative model of Irish Orientalism is the Irish poet James Cousins, who took a keen interest in Indian mythology and believed in the “shared sensibilities between Celtic and Oriental peoples” (352). Michael Silvestri, reviewing Lennon’s book, draws attention to the fact that its main sources were Irish writers, particularly from the Literary Renaissance, who wrote about the Orient from a distance, whereas Irishmen working in the imperial administration “such as the Calcutta judge Whitley Stokes and Indian Civil Service member George Grierson (both of whom wrote about Irish as well as Indian society) get much less attention”. Silvestri is, however, eager to stress that this should in no way cast a shadow on the “depth and richness of the material that Lennon provides”. He points out the great number of primary sources, for instance rare Indian newspapers and personal letters, and equally praises Lennon’s familiarity with the relevant secondary literature.

By emphasising the ambiguity inherent in Ireland's relationship with the Orient, particularly in the ideas of Irish academics, whose work hardly "contradicted the general idioms and doctrines of Anglo-French Orientalism, or the tendencies of European colonialism" (188) and that of Irish nationalists, Lennon shows that there was no uniform idea about the Orient in Irish society, that depended on the political convictions of individuals. This is precisely the approach Róisín Healy would later take with regard to the Irish perception of Eastern Europe. The two major works on which Healy based her article "Inventing Eastern Europe in Ireland, 1848-1918", Larry Wolff's *Inventing Eastern Europe* and Maria Todorova's *Imagining the Balkans*, are authoritative studies of Eastern European images and are therefore also the basis of the following chapter, which introduces the theoretical background of this paper and establishes a link between the general literature on the perception of Eastern Europe and Irish history and culture.

3. Theoretical Foundations

3.1. The Perception of the East

In March 1946, Winston Churchill addressed an audience in Fulton, Missouri, to comment on the political situation of the time and the dawn of the Cold War. In his speech Churchill drew attention to the distressing situation that had been inflicted on Eastern Europe as a consequence of the Second World War. The former British Prime Minister painted an imaginary line that divided the continent, stating:

From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe. Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia, all these famous cities and the populations around them lie in what I must call the Soviet sphere, and all are subject in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and, in some cases, increasing measure of control from Moscow. (Harbutt 186)

Even though Vienna would prove the fortunate exception and escaped the Soviet sphere, Churchill had outlined the division of the continent that would shape the political situation of Europe for the next 53 years and beyond. He went on to speak of a “shadow that had fallen upon the scene” and lamented the establishment of totalitarian control in those recently liberated countries. Churchill, however, was not an entirely innocent spectator, as Wolff (2) points out; he played a vital role “in drawing the line and hanging the curtain”. In his memoirs Churchill described how, during an informal meeting with Stalin in Moscow, he outlined the post-war power relations in Eastern Europe. He offered Stalin 90 percent of Romania, 75 percent of Bulgaria, 50 percent of Yugoslavia and Hungary, but only 10 percent of Greece (Bideleux and Jeffries 459).

Undeniably, Stalin and Churchill shared a common imperialist frame of mind. The British Prime Minister was used to decide the fate of nations without asking for their opinion, yet the effortlessness with which Churchill wrote off the entire Eastern half of the European continent suggests that there was more to it than simply imperialist interests. This chapter will show that the shadow, which Churchill evoked, had fallen upon the scene long before it was expressed in numbers and percentages. The division of Europe into a “civilised” West and a “backwards” East, as brilliantly argued by Larry Wolff, was an invention of the

Enlightenment. The antagonism between civilisation and barbarianism, however, has even deeper historical roots.

3.1.1. East and West

Neal Acherson (49) refers to the encounter between the ancient Greeks and the barbarians as the event “that began the idea of ‘Europe’ with all its arrogance, all its implications of superiority, all its assumptions of priority and antiquity, all its pretention to natural right to dominate”. Norman Davies (2006: 34) argues along the same line and concludes that the idea of a sharp division between the civilised West and the barbarous East dates back to ancient times, right to the beginning of what is often referred to as “Western Civilisation”.

Of course, when the dichotomy of civilisation and barbarianism was first established, there existed no conception of Eastern and Western Europe; moreover, in the mind of the Romans, and thereafter of most people until the Enlightenment, the geographical area where Central and Eastern Europe are located nowadays, was considered the North, not quite the East. When in 1785 the English writer William Cox accompanied his protégé on his Grand Tour through Europe, he could still sum up his voyage through Poland, Russia, Sweden and Denmark as “my travels through the Northern kingdoms of Europe” (Wolff 5). Wolff points to great Enlightenment thinkers like Voltaire and Rousseau, whose intellectual work prompted the reorientation of Europe’s mental map. By the 18th century Paris, London and Amsterdam had become the undisputed centres of economic and intellectual life and their perspective shaped the new understanding of the East. At the same time, all those notions of barbarianism and backwardness that had been associated with that Northern Europe also shifted focus and were now attributed to Eastern Europe. Wolff concludes that “[t]he Enlightenment had to invent Western Europe and Eastern Europe together, as complementary concepts, defining each other by opposition and adjacency” (5).

3.1.2. Eastern Europe and Orientalist Discourse

Larry Wolff’s highly influential book *Inventing Eastern Europe* draws on concepts established by Edward Said in his study on Orientalism. In this tradition, Eastern Europe defined Western Europe by contrast, just like the Orient defined the Occident. Said (2) clearly states that even though the Orient was constructed to define Europe “as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience”; it was not merely imagined but was subsequently translated

into material forms. The fundamental distinction between East and West served as the “starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, ‘mind’, destiny and so on” (2).

Therefore, even though the Orient is just as much an invention as the West and similar geographical constructions, the history of the idea of the Orient, as well as a tradition of thought, imagery and customs, transformed it from an abstract idea into a reality in the Western mind (Said 5). In order to examine Orientalism, Said applied Michel Foucault’s notion of discourse; a concept summarized by Lessa as “systems of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, courses of action, beliefs and practices that systematically construct the subjects and the worlds of which they speak” (285). Thus, by understanding Orientalism as discourse, Said sought to reveal the mechanisms by which European culture understands and produces the Orient as a political, social, military, ideological, scientific and imaginative entity. Said explains that, “because of Orientalism the Orient was not (and is not) a free subject of thought or action” (3). Every text or image that Western culture produces about the Orient is inevitably affected by Orientalism; every thought on the Orient is limited in a way unnoticed by its producer. Said points to great artists like Lord Byron, Goethe and Hugo, who, with their images, rhymes and motifs, brought the Orient to life in the minds of their Western audiences; however, as Said highlights, “the “real” Orient [at most] provoked a writer to his vision; it very rarely guided it” (22).

Said outlines the objectives of his study of Orientalism by saying that all academic knowledge that the West has produced on the Orient shows the imprint of unequal power relations. Hence, the strength of the West and the perceived weakness of the East are an intrinsic part of Orientalism. This juxtaposition also lies at the root of any worldview that advocates a natural division between geographic regions based on what is believed to be a fundamental difference (Said 45).

To fit Western concepts, a transformation of the Orient was needed. In order to make sense of reality, all cultures impose corrections and categorisations; what is alien to a culture has to be converted into units of knowledge that mirror aspects of their own culture (Said 67). To the Westerner, therefore, the Orient always resembled aspects of the West. Said cites the German Romantics as an example: they perceived Indian religion as an Oriental type of Germano-Christian pantheism. By doing so, those Orientalists transformed

the Orient in order to make it understandable for their own culture. Hence, Orientalists establish a code whose understanding and acceptance is key to the understanding of the Orient. It is part of this Orientalist discourse that instead of the original Oriental sources, the works of the Orientalists serve as the main references for verification. In Said's words: "Truth [...] becomes a function of learned judgement, not of the material itself, which in time seems to owe its existence to the Orientalist" (Said 67).

Even though there are many overlapping features of the discourses on Eastern Europe and Orientalism, the latter lacks an important component: the role as a mediator. Maria Todorova (17) expresses it best when she refers to Orientalism as "a discourse about an imputed opposition", whereas Balkanism, and by extension the discourse on Eastern Europe, "is a discourse about an imputed ambiguity". Wolff (7) articulates the same thought in different words, pointing out that Eastern Europe "was also made to mediate between Europe and the Orient. One might describe the invention of Eastern Europe as an intellectual project of demi-Orientalization". This idea places Eastern Europe somewhere on a scale between the West and Asia, yet not all Eastern European nations are perceived in equal terms. Bakic-Hayden (918) introduced the concept of "nestling orientalisms" to express the graduation of those states. Following this pattern, Asia is viewed as more "Eastern" than Eastern Europe and therefore more "other". Within Eastern Europe, however, there is also a distinct hierarchy which places the Balkans at the most "eastern" part of the scale.

It is not surprising that many of the studies that apply elements of Orientalism to Europe come from the field of Balkan studies, after all a substantial part of the peninsula was long ruled by a power that was considered entirely oriental: the Ottoman Empire. For a long time the Balkans were metaphorically presented as a bridge between two incompatible entities: East and West; Asia and Europe (Todorova 16). Although those images are dominant in Balkan studies, they are also a feature that occurs in Western imaginings of the entire East of Europe. Wolff (13) cites from Balzac's *Comédie humaine* which offers insight into the perception of Eastern Europe from a nineteenth-century Parisian perspective: "The inhabitants of the Ukraine, Russia, the plains of the Danube, in short the slave peoples, are a link between Europe and Asia, between civilization and barbarism". Drawing on those accounts as well as a number of travel logs, Wolff concludes that

Eastern Europe was located not as the antipode of civilization, not down in the depth of barbarism, but rather on the development scale that measured the distance between civilization and barbarism. (13)

Even though Wolff draws from examples deriving from the 18th and 19th century, the stereotypes and clichés established by the philosophers of the Enlightenment continue to exercise their deceptive influence to this very day. Thus, the main features of the discourse were established in the 18th century, and handed down from generation to generation limiting the discourse by what Said calls “textual attitude” (93-94). Hence, Eastern Europe as imagined in the West still carries the burden of negative images that have accumulated throughout the centuries and continue to mark Eastern Europe as the West’s “other” (Korte 5).

3.1.3. Easternness as Industrial Backwardness

The antagonism between Eastern and Western Europe that had been established during the Enlightenment was further strengthened during the nineteenth century by industrialisation and the socio-economic modernisation that started in the Northwest of Europe. The Enlightenment had created a set of assumptions about the reality of the East and the slower pace of economic development seemed to affirm the East’s backwardness. Norman Davies (2006: 16) criticizes the dominant pattern of thought that views industrial development as confined to a “western core”, in contrast to a backward periphery in the East. He criticises that this perception is extremely misleading and that it completely denies the existence of the industrial centres of Silesia, Lodz or the Donbass that were developed to a degree far beyond anything known in parts of the West such as Ireland and the Iberian Peninsula. Davies therefore concludes that it is simply not true that there was no significant industrialization in the Eastern Europe before WWII.

It was eventually the rule of communist dictatorships that caused the fundamental economic gap that came to divide Europe and affirmed previously held beliefs about Eastern backwardness. The hegemony of capitalism in the West established economic development as the main criteria of civilized life. Following this logic, the East came to be associated with “industrial backwardness, lack of advanced social relations and institutions typical for the developed capitalist West, irrational and superstitious cultures unmarked by Western Enlightenment” (Todorova 11–12). This implies that Western discourse on the East is

inherently biased and perceives the East's economic disadvantages as consistent with the assumptions it already nourished. Furthermore, this consistency raises confidence in those assumptions and boosts their application to other aspects of societies. Consequently, Eastern Europe remains associated with general backwardness.

3.1.4. Backwardness in Appearance and Manners

One such field to which these assumptions of backwardness were expanded were stereotypes about the appearance and manners of Eastern Europeans. Even though the pseudoscientific racial theories which had developed in the 19th century and peaked during the reign of Fascism have been thoroughly discredited by the atrocities committed during the Second World War, Davies suggests that, "popular attitudes can often lag behind scientific advances and that a residue of racial and ethnic prejudices still operates" (2006: 37). What he means is not so much the persistence of differentiation on racial grounds, but a *longue durée* concerning negative assumptions of the customs and manners of Eastern Europeans. Those prejudices developed during the 18th century when Eastern Europe was constructed by, what Wolff calls, "the combined conceptions of travelers in the imagination and imaginative travelers" (90).

To stress this point, Wolff (335-38) quotes from the accounts of a number of such travellers. Georg Forster, for instance, was a natural historian who had joined Captain Cook's second voyage before settling in Vilnius in 1784. His remarks about Poland were utterly scathing. He complained about "the filthiness in the moral and physical sense, the half-wildness (*Halbwildheit*) and half-civilisation (*Halbkultur*) of the people" (cited in Wolff 337). Apart from half-wildness and half-civilisation, two ascriptions that fit the perception of Eastern Europe as a liminal space between civilisation and barbarism, the filthiness of Poland is emphasized. Filthiness and disorder is a theme that could be found in most descriptions of Eastern Europe. Another German traveller, Joachim Christoph Friedrich Schultz passed through Lithuania in 1793 and remarked on the great number of Jews which gave the place "a sort of Oriental appearance" and generalized about villages as "a picture of disorder and ruin" (quoted in Wolff 335). The same was true of the philosopher Fichte who detected this supposedly Eastern European feature even in the Germans living in Poland: "they are pleasant, reasonable, obliging and polite, only unclean, just like the national Poles, and almost more so, since in them it is more striking to the German eye" (quoted in Wolff 335).

Another theme that is ever present in the discourse about Eastern Europe is the sexualisation of woman. Fichte remarked that Polish women had “a stronger sex drive than German females” and characterized their appearance as “so slovenly, [...] so shaped, so inviting, and so dirty” (cited in Wolff 335). The above mentioned traveller William Cox, describing the primitive living conditions of Russian peasants, also drew his reader’s attention to the loose morals of the local population. He offered a look inside their huts, where “men, women, and children [mixed], promiscuously, without discrimination of sex or condition, and frequently almost in a state of nature” (cited in Wolff 32). Not long before Cox passed through the plains of Russia, another Western European traveller had entered a similar Russian hut to make a deal symptomatic of the West’s perception of Eastern sexuality: the man’s name was Giacomo Casanova. Casanova had come to Russia to seek work at the court of Catherine the Great, an endeavour that proved unsuccessful; however, Russia did not deny him the sexual adventures he had previously enjoyed all over Europe. Yet, in Russia the way he came to meet his new lover was unusual, he simply purchased a thirteen-year-old peasant girl for 100 rubels. (Wolff 52).

This act of sexually subjecting Eastern Europe to Western domination is reminiscent of the contemporary sex trade which also perceives Eastern European women as an object of Western desire. The same is true regarding 18th century ideas about Eastern dirtiness and unrefined manners; though certainly not in those extreme forms, these sentiments are still being reproduced nowadays. Veličković (197) points out that, not least because of their communist heritage, Eastern Europeans are still “usually perceived as unrefined with an outdated taste in fashion and usually wearing distasteful make-up”. He draws attention to an article from the *Guardian* (22 November 2007) which points to some of the images that circulate in the British tabloid press. In this article Tim Drawling exposes urban myths such as Eastern Europeans are “Eating our swans”, “Stealing our unwanted clothes” and “Catching all our carp”. Veličković goes on to suggest that being poor and badly dressed has a racialising effect; it ascribes a kind of “dirty whiteness” (198) to Eastern Europeans.

3.1.5. Eastern Europe on the Mental Map

Wolff’s concept of Eastern Europe being constructed by “the combined conceptions of travelers in the imagination and imaginative travelers” (90) also offers the key to the understanding of the geographical location of Eastern Europe in the Western mind. One of

those “imaginative travellers” was the French philosopher Voltaire. Despite the fact that he had never set foot east of Berlin, Voltaire’s *Charles XII*, a description of the Swedish King’s military campaign in Eastern Europe, offers a remarkable amount of imaginary details about the people of the East and their customs. The accounts, which were entirely constructed in the philosopher’s mind, proved nevertheless “influential in mapping Eastern Europe in the mind of the Enlightenment” (Wolff 90). Just like the “truth” about the Orient derives from material that was constructed by Orientalists, most thinkers of the Enlightenment did not care to consult Eastern European sources either. In Voltaire’s case, Wolff claims, the East was not even placed on contemporary maps but subjected to ancient historical knowledge. One such example is Voltaire’s description of Poland as located in ancient Sarmatia. He goes so far as to describe to his reader what he himself has never seen: “One sees still in the Polish soldiers the character of the ancient Sarmatians, their ancestors, as little discipline, the same fury to attack”(quoted in Wolff 91).

Voltaire’s drawing from ancient sources to understand the reality of Eastern Europe was not just an isolated incidence, it was commonplace. In 1765 the former French consul at the Crimea, Charles de Peyssonnel, published his *Historical and Geographical Observations on the Barbarian Peoples who inhabited the Banks of the Danube and the Black Sea*. He claimed to have discovered ethnographic evidence of the barbarian invasion that took place in this region in ancient times. According to him all those peoples could be traced back to Asiatic Scythians and originated from Central Asia and Siberia. The Scythians were known to readers with a classical education from the fourth book of Herodotus, where their successful resistance to the Persian army is described. Drinking blood and sacrificing prisoners of war made them the archetype of a barbarian people. As Wolff states, Peyssonnel’s writings had a profound influence on the perception on Eastern Europe in France. Hence, when twenty years later a young Frenchman called Louise-Philippe de Séguin entered Poland on the way to St. Petersburg, he was not surprised to discover “hords of Huns, Scythians, Veneti, Slavs, and Sarmatians” around him. (Wolff 284-87). By linking the Poles to the ancient Sarmatians and Scythians, 18th-century writers placed them onto the above mentioned development scale that measured the distance between civilization and barbarism. Not only were they perceived as a link between the West and the Orient, they also linked the present with the ancient past.

It is remarkable to see how closely the 18th century's imaginative divide between East and West resembled the line Churchill would later draw from Stettin to Trieste. Just like Ségun found himself among barbarians when he entered Poland, the wife of the English ambassador to Constantinople, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, anticipated a similar experience upon leaving Vienna on her way to join her husband. Even though there was no political border to be crossed, entering Hungary seemed to her an occasion of great danger. She wrote to her sister: "Adieu, Dear Sister, if I survive my Journey you shall hear from me again". Even though she had not yet set foot in Eastern Europe, she already ruled out visiting Vienna again on the way back, as she had "no thoughts of enduring over again so great a fatigue" (quoted in Wolff 39).

A traveller who had to endure the "fatigue" of returning through Eastern Europe against his wish was the American John Ledyard. Wolff (344) refers to Ledyard's ambitious intended expedition through Russia and the Northwest of America as an example of Western reductionism and generalization about the East. In St. Petersburg the American traveller had obtained insufficient travel authorisation for his journey eastwards and was soon caught by Russian officials in Siberia, where he was conducting dubious anthropological research. Against his will, Ledyard was transported back to Eastern Europe and set free at the border to Poland. With no desire to spend more time among the Poles, whose customs he considered little different from and equally uncivilized as those of the Russians, Tartars and Jews, Ledyard headed west, and upon crossing the border to Prussia, he passed a devastating verdict on the counties he had just left behind.

I have within the Space of 3 English Miles leapt the great barrier of Asiatic & European manners; from Servility, Indolence, Filth, Vanity, Dishonesty, Suspicion, Jealousy, Cowardice, Knavery, Reserve, Ignorance, Bassess d'Esprit & I know not what, to everything opposite to it, busy Industry, Frankness, Neatness, well loaded Tables, plain good manners, and obliging attention, Firmness, Intelligence, &, thank God, Cheerfulness & above all Honesty, which I solemnly swear I have not looked full in the Face since I first passed it the Eastward & Northward of the Baltic. Once more welcome Europe to my warmest Embraces. (quoted in Wolff 354)

Ledyard's remarks certainly mirror the frustration he must have felt because he could not complete his grand expedition; however, it does not explain why he would define the border between Prussia and Poland as the barrier of Asiatic and European manners. By the time he felt Europe's warmest embraces he had already traversed several hundreds of kilometres of

European territory. This paradox, as Wolff (355) remarks, could only be resolved by the creation of Eastern Europe.

One may certainly argue that all those examples deriving from the 18th century are of limited relevance to the understanding of contemporary assumptions about Eastern Europe; however, following the definition of discourse, these forms of thinking about the East created a powerful set of assumptions and prejudices that continue to influence our current way of thinking. One does not even have to venture into the ideology of the Nazis, whose racial delusions escalated the discourse to a degree that makes every comparison seem inadequate; there are numerous more recent examples of reductionism running wild. Davies (2006: 27-30) argues that deep-seated assumptions about the Eastern half of the continent are often mirrored in studies by Western scholars. He attacks the predominant Anglo-American academic tradition of reducing the history of “Western civilisation” to the history of a limited set of Western European countries; namely England, France, Italy and Germany. The entire East of Europe, with the exception of modern Russia, is primarily excluded from this intellectual construction (2006: 49). Davies underlines his point by stating two examples of influential Western academics that illustrate how scientific research on the one hand differentiates between Western countries, whereas, on the other hand it very often treats the East as a uniform mass. The first example is a study on European family structures by a group of Cambridge sociologists (Wall et al) that was published in 1983 and the second is Immanuel Wallenstein’s book on the origin of the European world economy that appeared in 1974 (Davies 2006: 28-29). What both studies have in common is the way they draw from a large sample of Western sources, but only from a very limited set of Eastern ones; however, instead of acknowledging their limitations, they drew conclusions about the entire East on the basis of those sources. Thus, in the first example, data from three Western European villages – Elmdon in Essex, Grossenmeer in Lower Saxony and Fagagna in Lombardy – was contrasted with that of Sobakino, a village half way between Moscow and the Kazakh border. The outcome of the study was meant to offer additional information on the classification of European families in distinct Western and Eastern categories, whose dividing line runs– just like the Iron Curtain – from the Baltic Sea to Trieste. A clear division between European family patterns may, or may not exist; however, trying to support such a construction by relying on data from a single Eastern European village is reductionism at its best.

The revolutions of 1989 contributed a great deal to the revision of Eastern Europe on the West's mental map; it did not however sweep away the Western belief in its own superiority. The Hungarian historian Attila Melegh (1) notes that the dominant discourse on Eastern Europe after the fall of communism was that of "a return to normalcy". This equation of the West with "normal" automatically reduces the East to an "abnormal" entity. Normalcy in this context means diversity, freedom, democracy and market economy. These were the attributes the East had to acquire. Therefore, in the process of "Europeanization" the East was expected to leave all those abnormal and distinctly Eastern European features, such as corruption, racism and xenophobia, behind. In Melegh's words "this mostly upward-looking perspective takes most of its elements from Western Orientalist patterns and often utilizes dichotomies and cleanliness versus dirt, rationality versus emotional irrationalism and 'Europe' versus 'Balkans'" (49). This discourse assumes that the West is free of those negative attributes and an East-West slope is constructed with those not "truly" European countries located at the bottom.

3.2. The East in Irish History and Literature

The previous chapter examined how Eastern Europe as the European "Other" was constructed not by its inhabitants, but in the imagination of Western travellers and writers. As Wolff argues, the discourse on Eastern Europe with all its allusions to barbarism, backwardness and filth is an invention of the Enlightenment which was passed down for centuries and still shapes the way we think about the East. However, conducting his research, Wolff was caught in the same trap as many other Western scholars before him. By drawing almost exclusively on sources written in English, French, German and Italian, he committed precisely the kind of reduction of "Western Civilisation" to the history of a limited set of Western European countries which Davies (2006: 27-30) criticises. Wolff's theory strengthens the assumption that Eastern Europe was perceived by the West in a homogeneous way. This assumption was also attacked by Róisín Healy (103-104), who refers to Maria Todorova's more differentiated view on the subject. Todorova highlights the importance of every observer's cultural background and experience which shapes the way he views the East: "Everyone has had one's own Orient, pertaining to space or time, most often to both. The perception of the Orient has been, therefore, relational, depending on

the normative value set and the observation point.” (Todorova 12). The particular “observation point” that is most relevant for this study, is that of the Irish nation.

Given the complex political situation in Ireland, no homogeneous view on Eastern Europe can be assumed, in the same manner as there was no homogenous view on British Imperialism. Plenty of Irishmen went on to make a career in the British Empire and just as many Irish born writers contributed to the dominant Western perception of Eastern Europe as outlined in the previous chapter. In this respect, Healy points to *Dracula*, a novel that seems to “fit so neatly into this view that Vesna Goldsworthy failed to note that its author, Bram Stoker, was Irish rather than English” (Healy 104). Goldsworthy claims in her study *Inventing Ruritania* that “[t]he Balkan worlds of popular imagination are peopled by British creations” (cited in Healy 104). On the other hand, Irish nationalists often presented the political situation in Eastern Europe as a mirror image of that in Ireland. In particular Poland and Hungary moved into the spotlight and served as parallels between Ireland and the East.

3.2.1. Historical Irish Discourse on the East

The 19th century saw an unprecedented amount of Irish interest in Eastern Europe. Political parallels between the region and Ireland resulted in an Irish discourse concerning Eastern Europeans that was distinct from that of its Western European neighbours. While Wolff and Todorova outline the dominate discourse as characterized by the construction of a European “other”, Irish nationalists perceived Eastern Europe as a region that similarly suffered from the imperialism of powerful neighbours, hence Eastern Europeans were perceived as companions in misfortune. Even though the Irish nationalist discourse on Eastern Europe differed fundamentally from the dominant discourse in the way it perceived imperialism, it was just as much artificially constructed. Information on Eastern Europe, as Healy illustrates, derived almost exclusively from second-hand sources such as newspapers and fictional accounts (105). Most of the attention was paid to the “historic nations” of Poland, Hungary and Bohemia, whereas the nations further to the East attracted less interest. Healy concludes that the Irish discourse on Eastern Europe “was largely rhetorical as there were few opportunities for Irish people to influence the region. Thus, it functioned mainly as a channel for discussion of events at home” (105). The East of Europe was therefore not so much observed for the East’s sake, but because the comparison with the injustices inflicted

on those eastern nations could serve to emphasize the discrimination of the Irish people at home.

The most striking similarity between the Polish and Irish state is their non-existence in the 19th century. Both countries disappeared from the political maps of Europe at roughly the same time and also gained independence within a few years after the First World War. The first partition of Poland took place in 1772 and the state ultimately ceased to exist in 1795. Slightly later, Ireland lost its own parliament in the Act of Union in 1801. These parallels between Ireland and Poland were already noted by contemporaries. The leader of the Irish rebellion of 1798, Theobald Wolfe Tone referred in his defence not only to George Washington, but also to the leader of the Polish uprising of 1794, Thaddeus Kosciuszko (Healy 106). Wolfe Tone's intentions are clear: the partition of Poland by Russia, Prussia and Austria had been considered an injustice in Britain. By linking this event to the Irish struggle for independence, British hypocrisies could be effectively revealed.

In the 1840s, Hungary temporarily moved into the centre of Irish attention. Like many other nations in Europe, the Hungarians rose against their imperial master in 1848, first demanding reforms and eventually declaring a republic in April 1849. The revolution was, however, suppressed by the Austrian Army with substantial help from Russia. Back in control, the government in Vienna decreed the dissolution of the Hungarian parliament and obliged the Hungarian deputies to serve in the parliament in Vienna. Healy provides evidence that Irish observers considered Austria's actions as "effectively chang[ing] Hungary's status within the Habsburg Monarchy to that of Ireland's within the United Kingdom since the Act of Union" (107).

Within twenty years, however, the political power relations in Central Europe changed again and Austria was forced into a compromise that led to the foundation of the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy. Only foreign policy, defence and finance remained in a joint ministry, all other matters were to be decided by the revived parliament in Budapest, whose approval was required for all imperial laws. For Ireland this arrangement provided a model for a new treaty with Great Britain that could replace the unloved Act of Union. This compromise was particularly endorsed by Irish priests who resented the establishment of the Church of Ireland by the Act of Union. (Healy 108)

In 1863 Irish nationalists paid great attention to the Polish Rising. The Irish MP John Pope Hennessey was one of the greatest supporters of the Polish cause at Westminster. He insisted on the Pole's right to rebel against the oppressive Russian government and stressed the primacy of the popular will. All this was no coincidence considering the Irish campaign for Home Rule that took place at the same time. Hennessey did not establish a direct link between the rising in Poland and the political situation in Ireland; however, as Healy (107) argues, the criticism of the Union was apparent. In the year of the Polish rising the newspaper *The Irish People*, which supported the ideas of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, suggested that violence was also a legitimate means for the Irish people and spoke of Ireland as "the dear old home, the Poland of the sea" (cited in Healy 107-108).

Even though many of the parallels between Ireland and Poland were indeed strikingly obvious, the British establishment rejected any such ideas. Davies (2006: 22) draws attention to an article published in *The Times* in September 1865 which commented on the Fenian movement and expressed the view that, despite the injustice of the past, the present situation in Ireland left its people with no justification for grievance. When, however, a week later a Russian journal reprinted the article and compared the Irish to the Polish situation within the Russian empire, *The Times* protested vehemently. The *Journal de Saint-Petersbourg politique et littéraire* had supplemented the article with a paragraph claiming that "the circumstances [are] so identical [...] that we believe it necessary to remind Russian readers of the fact that it is Ireland in 1865, and not Poland in 1863, that is spoken of" (cited in Davies 2006: 22). *The Times* responded by drawing up a list of all the atrocities committed against the Polish people, claiming that none of these had parallels in Ireland. They concluded that "Ireland was as free as England, and its assimilation to the more powerful country proceeds from natural causes, and is in no way the effect of force or of tyrannical laws" (cited in Davies 2006: 22). This reveals the imperialist attitudes of the British newspaper, the reasoning that assimilation was taking place voluntarily and was overall a positive thing reveals the assumption that the Irish, at their present stage, could only benefit from assimilation to a more civilised race.

Despite the fact that the editors of *The Times* fervently opposed any comparison between British rule in Ireland and Russian rule in Poland, they did not deny the similarities of the two people in terms of "national character". Davies illustrates that they nourished

little sympathy for either of them. “The Poles are the Irish of the continent” they claimed and supported this conclusion by referring to their “unstable character, their incapacity of self-government, and the futility of their schemes”, moreover, they were “a very hot-headed and unreasonable people” (2006: 23).

All those assumptions about the Polish are well in line with the findings of Larry Wolff’s research; however, by equating the Irish with the Poles they were likewise placed somewhere in between civilisation and barbarism. It is striking to what extent the mechanisms of “othering” resembled those employed in the construction of Eastern Europe. In Edmund Spencer’s *View of the Present Stage of Ireland*, written in 1598, the same theory of a Scythian origin of the Irish was expressed that would later link Eastern Europeans to barbarism. The development and persistence of this Anti-Irish racism was recently outlined by Curtis (1996). She bases her argument on illustrations, mostly comics, which depict the Irish as an uncivilized, barbaric people and thereby justified British rule over them. A connection between poverty and violence in Ireland and British policy was hardly ever made. On the contrary, poverty and violence were seen as the immediate consequence of a rebellious Celtic character that marked the Irish as an inferior race.

The perceived inferiority of the Irish people was also connected to their religious otherness from UK mainstream. Irish Roman Catholicism again corresponded with that of the Polish and Hungarian people. In the Irish perception of the East, however, only the Polish example offered a suitable parallel, as the Poles, unlike the Hungarians, were partly dominated by two empires with a non-Catholic majority, Germany and Russia. The *Kulturkampf* in Germany sparked attacks on the Polish Catholic minority, while Greek Catholics in Russian Poland were forced to convert to the Russian Orthodox Church. An article on the *Kulturkampf* in the *Freeman’s Journal* in March 1872 emphasised the similarities between the two nations: “Poor Poland, she has had to suffer even as poor Ireland; and this says all that could be said for a tried, a fiercely-tried nationality. Her language is to be estranged from amongst her homesteads, and it shall be treason for her priests to cherish its existence amongst her people. The curse of Poland is the curse of Ireland. Both are Catholic” (cited in Healy 109).

At the close of the 19th century, Irish attention shifted from Poland and Hungary towards the Balkans. While the Third Home Rule Bill was debated in Westminster in 1912, a

group of Irishman believed that independence could only be won by force. They drew inspiration from the Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913 which had brought Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro and Greece to the brink of full independence from the Ottoman Empire. The Fenian newspaper, *Irish Freedom*, drew inspiration from those wars and propagated open war as an alternative to settling the Irish question by endless negotiations (Healy 115).

As mentioned before, Irish interest in Eastern Europe derived from political motivations. The comparison with Eastern Europe should highlight the suppression of the Irish people by the British ruling elite. Thus, the view of Eastern Europe was not fixed; it changed according to the political objectives of those who employed these comparisons. Healy (116) found that a massive reinterpretation of Poland occurred in Irish nationalist circles during the First World War, as they aligned themselves to Germany, Britain's main enemy. Quickly Arthur Griffith from Sinn Féin, who in 1904 had written *The Resurrection of Hungary* comparing the position of the Irish in the United Kingdom to that of Hungary before 1967, denied any maltreatment of Poles in the German empire and located oppression only on the Russian side of the partition line. Fischer (187) points out that *Sinn Féin*, the party's newspaper, even interpreted the increase in population and prosperity in German-ruled Poland as a sign of benign government. However, as Healy (116) makes clear, the moderate majority, many of whom fought on the British side in the hope to win Home Rule by their sacrifice, still insisted on Poland's role as a victim.

After the First World War various Central and Eastern European countries won independence; the Irish however had to fight on until 1922 and sacrifice the six counties of Ulster before they would also gain their independence. After independence was won, most of the political parallels between the Republic of Ireland and the East ended. Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania and the Baltic States were less fortunate and enjoyed only a brief spell of freedom, before Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union inflicted another 50 years of dependence on the peoples of Eastern Europe.

3.2.2. Similarities between Ireland and Eastern Europe in Literature and Film

As during the 19th century the East played a significant role in Irish imagination, it was only natural that Ireland's foremost writers should also take an interest in the East and interpret it in the way that suited their political convictions and their cultural background. Thus,

protestant Irish writers like Sheridan le Fanu and Bram Stoker would view Eastern Europe differently from their Catholic colleagues. Their representations, as McAteer (207) illustrates, were influenced by an ideology of progress that considered the East, and similarly Ireland, as primitive and backward. William Butler Yeats, a champion of the Celtic revival and Irish nationalism, on the other hand perceived Eastern Europe in positive terms and admired the rebellious spirit of its people. Starting in 2004 Eastern Europe moved again into the centre of attention, yet this time it did not serve as a far-flung reference point of internal affairs, but Eastern Europeans living on Europe's most western islands gained prominence.

In his article on the representation of Eastern Europe in Irish Protestant literature, Michael McAteer argues that Eastern Europe, as the setting of Sheridan le Fanu's *Camilla* and Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, eventually served as a code for Ireland. He claims that the "representation of Eastern Europe in these works relates directly to the circumstances of Protestantism within Ireland towards the end of the nineteenth century" (207). Therefore, this works, which shaped certain lasting assumptions about Eastern Europe, partly reflected anxieties related to the yet unsolved Irish question.

McAteer's reading of *Camilla* is certainly rather irritating. This springs from the fact that McAteer wrongly located Styria, where the novel is set, in Hungary, even though the duchy formed part of the western half of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Bearing in mind that Wolff located the dividing line between the two halves of the continent somewhere west of Vienna, this is no insignificant fact. However, applying Bakic-Hayden's (918) concept of "nestling orientalism" one could in fact argue that Styria, after all a border region with the Slavic speaking world, was one of the most eastern parts of the West. Despite this geographic inaccuracy, McAteer's argument that Styria was actually a metaphor for Ireland remains convincing. Most of the support for this argument is already to be found in the first paragraph of the story:

In Styria, we, though by no means magnificent people, inhabit a castle, or *schloss*. A small income, in that part of the world, goes a great way. Eight or nine hundred a year does wonders. Scantly enough ours would have answered among the wealthy people at home. My father is English, and I bear an English name, although I never saw England. But here, in this lonely and primitive place, where everything is marvellously cheap, I really don't see how ever so much more money would at all materially add to our comfort, or even luxuries. (207)

It is indeed easy, as McAteer (208) suggests, to transpose the setting depicted in *Camilla* to rural Ireland in the nineteenth century. Where else could one find people with English names that live in castles, but have never been to England? The narrator's experience closely resembles that of an Anglo-Irish person that, even though detached from contemporary English society, considers England the location of the highest form of civilisation. By contrast, even though he insists on living in comfort and luxury, he considers Styria a "lonely and primitive place". This depiction is also characteristic of rural Ireland in the literature of the Romantic period. Moreover, Le Fanu points to "the dubious value of money in a remote landscape [which] is as relevant to the Ireland Le Fanu knew as the Hungary [sic] he imagined" (McAteer 208).

Heavily influenced by *Camilla*, another Protestant Irishman, Bram Stoker, produced a novel that shapes the way Eastern Europe is viewed to the very day. Dracula's castle is a major tourist site in modern Romania and often the only thing foreigners know about the country. The novel was published in 1897 and employs exactly the kind of negative stereotypes Wolff has documented for the Enlightenment. Jonathan Harper's fictional travel account closely resembles those of historical travellers described in the previous chapter. Harper's impression that on the way from Vienna to Budapest they "were leaving the West and entering the East" (5) illustrates how the mental map of the Enlightenment had been perpetuated. Healy (112) shares McAteer's impression that Eastern Europe, in this case Transylvania, works as a code for Ireland. She highlights that several critics interpret the literary translation of Transylvania, which is "beyond the forest", as a reference to "beyond the Pale". The Pale is the name of a boundary around Dublin which used to mark the medieval border between English and Gaelic Ireland. Similarly, the word "Dracula" could refer to the Gaelic compound "drochfhola", which means bad blood and is pronounced almost like the name of the novel's protagonist. *Dracula* has been interpreted in various ways: the vampire himself has been connected to very contradictory images like the absentee landlord, or, because of his "belief in the redemptive quality of patriotic blood sacrifice, his efforts to pass as English in England, and his commitment to secretive nocturnal activity" to the exact opposite: the Fenian (Healy 113). No matter how oppositional the interpretations are, the novel's allusions to Ireland's political situation of the time are undisputed.

One of those who pointed to the similarities between the independence movements in the East and that of Ireland and thus saw Eastern Europe in more positive terms was William Butler Yeats. In this respect, O'Reilly and Penz quote from Yeats's poem *How Ferencz Renyi kept silent*, which presents a fictional account of the Hungarian struggle for independence which could serve the Irish as an inspiration.

We, too have seen our bravest and our best,
To prison go, and mossy ruin rest,
Where homes once whitened vale and mountain crest,
Therefore, O nation of the bleeding breast,
Liberation for the Hungary of the West! (16)

Literary interest in Eastern Europe was, however, not a one-way street. The Irish Literary Revival was closely followed in parts of the East, particularly in Poland. Merchant stresses that "the work of Yeats and Synge hinged on a strong feeling of affinity between the Polish and Irish cultural and political contexts (42)". In 1904, Jan Kasprowicz, a Polish writer and member of the literary movement Young Poland, produced a translation of Yeats's *The Countess Cathleen*; he also translated a number of poems and some of Synge's plays and brought them to the attention of the Polish audience (Merchant 42).

Another Polish writer with a vivid interest in Irish culture, history and politics was Adolf Nowaczynski, who claimed that "All the Irish plays can be translated into Polish, change only the names and bring them to us and they will be lives taken from the Polish psyche" (cited in Merchant 62). A satirical dramatist and literary critic, Nowaczynski followed the Irish literary scene closely and frequently pointed to the many similarities between the two cultural movements. Paraphrasing Synge's famous play, he even referred to the Irish as the "Poles of the Western World" (cited in Merchant 55). He also wrote extensively on the activities of the Gaelic League in reviving the Irish language and creating a national identity. All this, Merchant (57) emphasises, he did with the objective to raise the spirit of the Polish people and strengthen their belief in a turn of fortune by juxtaposing their comparably short suffering with the 700 years of suppression the Irish people had already endured.

As Ireland gained independence and, unlike Eastern Europe, managed to hang on to its freedom, artistic exchange also decreased noticeably. The British writer Mike Philips (47)

criticises the lack of useful imagery about Eastern Europe and its people in English literature. He expresses the belief that “fiction is not an activity somehow isolated from the world in which it exists.” Fictional accounts about a subject are a key element in the construction of stereotypes, which again shape the representation of the given subject in literature and the media. Moreover, Phillips makes a crucial distinction between active and static stereotypes. Active stereotypes are subject of change caused by recent experience and public debate, whereas static stereotypes “are essentially a recycling of archaic mythologies” (46). The problem of contemporary literature in English is therefore the lack of imagery based on active stereotypes. Due to this deficit, the imagery of Eastern Europe is still “dominated by vampires, romantic bandits, post-feudal aristocracy and endless communal conflicts” (43). Philips ultimately concludes that it is the obligation of poets and writers to produce new stories on which a European identity can be based.

One of the media of artistic expression that reaches out to a big audience and thus contributes to the construction of active stereotypes is film. Two recent films dealt more or less explicitly with the experience of Eastern European immigrants on the British Isles: Ken Loach’s *It’s a Free World...* and John Carney’s *Once*. The former, even though British, nevertheless holds implications for the Irish case, as the major theme, the exploitation of workers in capitalism and the subaltern position of migrants in society are interchangeable.

It’s a free world... is the story of two women from London, Angie and Rose, that establish a job agency that provides cheap, illegal work to British companies. The film focuses primarily on the two characters and tells the story from a British perspective; however, also the Eastern European immigrants are represented and given a voice in the film. Rostek und Uffelmann analyse the film in order to answer the question: can the Polish Migrant speak? They apply Spivak’s theory on the subaltern which assumes that it is impossible to speak from “a subaltern position without being infected by the categories of the dominant discourse and its institutions, which go as far as to authorise the subaltern protest against them” (Rostek and Uffelmann 313). Hence, in *It’s a free world...* Loach contributes to the British, or Western, discourse on Polish immigration, and even the Polish characters in the film are represented by him rather than expressing a genuine Polish position.

The representation of the Polish workers by the British director is particularly evident in respect to the character Karol. The audience gets to know Karol right at the beginning of the film when he is interviewed in the Polish city of Katowice by the recruitment company for which Angie works. However, unlike the other recruits, he sticks out because of his proficiency in English and his confident appearance. Karol is the only Polish character with the language skills necessary to express his opposition to the exploitive migratory system and his frustration about the harsh reality in London in a coherent manner. His voice, unlike that of the other workers, is heard because he speaks the language of the host society. Rostek and Uffelmann point to Karol's last appearance in the film which they consider symptomatic for Karol's function as "Ken Loach's mouthpiece" (318). Karol is meant to provide "an insight into the immigrant workers" (Loach cited in Rostek and Uffelmann 316), but his representation disregards the financial reality of most immigrants. Karol speaks up against the exploitive system and accuses Angie of having stolen money from him and other workers; nevertheless he does not accept the money Angie offers him for his translation work in the last scene in which he appears. Dignity and idealistic values mean more to him than money. Rostek and Uffelmann (319) conclude that by making Karol the representative of the Polish immigrant community, the "voice of the Polish migrant is stifled by that of an English director with a well-defined social agenda". Thus, Ken Loach creates a modern imagery of Eastern Europeans; however, he presents them mainly as victims of an unfair exploitative system. Loach's objective is not to faithfully represent Eastern Europeans, but to functionalise them for his critique of capitalism. Rendering them victims, however, only enforces their marginalised position in society.

Unlike *It's a free world...*, John Carney's *Once* does not push a social agenda; it is essentially a love story with a big focus on music. The film released in 2006 tells the story of a busker in Dublin, who unsuccessfully tries to get his musical career started and fixes vacuum cleaners in the evening, and an immigrant from the Czech Republic that makes a living by selling flowers and magazines on the street. She shares his passion for music and turns out to be a very talented pianist. In the course of the film she helps him launch his career as a musician and an intimate friendship develops. Even though everything seems to point towards a happy end she ultimately reconciles with her husband, the father of her daughter, whom she had left behind in the Czech Republic. The busker does likewise and moves to London to further his career and start all over with his ex-girlfriend.

Once received very favourable reviews all over the world and even won the Oscar for Best Song in 2008. With productions costs of only \$150,000 it cashed in \$20 million worldwide. The whole film was shot with conventional digital cameras featuring non-professional actors. Particularly the realistic portrayal of modern Irish society after the economic boom and its Eastern European immigrants was consistently praised (Hermann 276). The female protagonist, unnamed and thus credited as Girl, is characterized very positively. She is a reliable friend, an outstanding musician, a caring mother and responsible person. Even though she loves the busker she resists the temptation of starting a relationship but instead opts for giving her marriage another chance because that is what she considers best for her daughter.

The positive characterisation of Girl in the film resists, as Hermann points out, “several degrading stereotypes commonly associated with immigrants and Eastern European women specifically” (281). He goes on to explain that working in several jobs she neither conforms to the stereotype of immigrants as spongers, nor does her appearance, her plain clothes and her unremarkable looks, evoke stereotypes of Eastern European women as sexual objects. Those images certainly contribute to a more accurate representation of Eastern Europeans and the formation of more positive stereotypes; nevertheless, Hermann also identifies a number of problematic aspects in the film’s representation of Eastern European immigrants in Dublin.

Firstly, the film reinforces the stereotype that immigrants are exclusively employed in the low-paid unskilled sector of the Irish economy. Girl has three different jobs, she sells flowers, magazines and works as a cleaning lady; all of these are stereotypical occupations for Eastern European women. This is problematic as it suggests that, despite her talents and English skills, she could not find employment in a more challenging sector. Three low-paid jobs, moreover, also imply poverty; an unfavourable stereotype reinforced by the depiction of Girl’s living conditions. She shares a substandard flat that lacks light and modern furniture with her mother and daughter. They also share a TV with their Polish neighbours, which not only marks them as poor, but extends this image to the wider immigrant community. (Hermann 281-282)

Secondly, Hermann draws attention to the protagonist’s complete lack of a Czech identity. Instead Girl and her family “serve as indistinctive, generalized representatives of

the Eastern European migrant phenomenon in Celtic Tiger Ireland” (282). Particularly the costume of Girl’s mother is a manifestation of this generalizing view. Marketa Irglová, the lead actress, emphasises that nobody in the Czech Republic would wear clothes like that. It was the Irish costume girl that insisted on that particular look with a lot of fake gold and “dressed her up as a gypsy or something” (cited in Herrmann 282). This evokes Lessa’s definition of discourse as a “systems of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, courses of action, beliefs and practices that systematically construct the subjects and the worlds of which they speak” (285). The depiction of the Czech immigrants as poor and poorly dressed expresses imagery present in the Irish discourse on Eastern Europe rather than the immigrant’s reality.

Just as the Irish comments on the historical similarities between Ireland and Eastern Europe primarily reflected the situation at home rather than developments in the East, so do artistic expressions also recreate Eastern Europe or Eastern Europeans according to the dominant discourses at home. Sheridan Le Fanu, Bram Stoker and William Butler Yeats are only three prominent examples of Irish writers whose work was influenced by these discourses. The striking parallels between the two regions that must have been evident to the contemporary reader in the 19th century are, however, not mirrored in the film *Once*. It is a sad fact that even despite the film’s positive characterisation of the female protagonist, it predominantly depicts Eastern Europe as a uniform other and serves to perpetuate a discourse of inequality. To what extent these historical similarities played into the representation of Eastern European immigrants in the *Irish Times*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Irish News* will be examined in the analysis part of this paper. Before that, however, it is necessary to understand the exceptional role migration played in the history of Ireland.

4. Migration in the Irish Experience

Considering the misfortunes that have struck the Republic of Ireland during the recent economic crisis, the heading of this chapter already seems outdated. While once again, thousands of young Irish leave their country every month to seek better opportunities elsewhere, the days when the Celtic Tiger's roaring economy lured numerous Eastern Europeans to Ireland, promising work, education, experience or simply adventure, seem surprisingly long ago. While Ireland is recovering from an unexpected crisis, careful warnings from the time of the economic boom sound almost prophetic, "Nowadays Ireland seems to present a picture that is in many ways less notable from its exceptionality and more in line with that of our European neighbours, but previous experience shows us that this may change again in the future" (Tovey and Share 135).

This sad reminder that history repeats itself points to the immense importance of the experience of emigration in the collective memory of the Irish people. In order to examine how the Irish past influenced the ways in which large-scale immigration from Eastern Europe was presented in the media, the cultural significance that migration, in this case mostly emigration, had in Irish society has to be considered. Like so often when dealing with Ireland, one has to start the story at the beginning of the 19th century and cover the time when the famine and constant emigration reduced the Irish population by almost fifty percent. In 1921, after almost a century of high emigration rates, independence raised hopes that the Irish population could at last live in a self-sufficient way, making emigration a phenomenon of the past. It was, however, not before the turn of the 21st century that Ireland would reach a level of economic growth strong enough to bring emigration to a halt and even attract immigrants from all over the world to come and seek a better future on the emerald island.

4.1. Famine to Independence

The Great Famine of 1845-49 casts its shadow over the entire history of emigration from Ireland. It was traditionally seen as "the watershed of Irish history" (Foster 318): the one cataclysmic event that singlehandedly generated the entire Irish diaspora. Fitzgerald stresses the distorting effect the legacy of the famine had on the perception of the century before and after. The general assumption of many members of the diaspora that their ancestors,

albeit having left earlier or later, were victims of the famine, bear witness to this misconception (Fitzgerald 165). The deepest impact of the famine on Irish history, as Lyon (16) suggests, might have been “its ultimate psychological legacy”. This refers to the institutionalization of a long-standing Anglophobia in Ireland and abroad. The famine developed into the “origin myth” (Comerford 84) of the Irish diaspora and thereby extended the dimension of the Irish question from an internally British issue to a global one.

Recent research suggests that the economic effects attributed to the famine such as demographic decline, large-scale emigration and insufficient farming structures were already common in the decades before the famine; they were only accelerated by the disaster (Foster 318). Share et al. add that distinctive characteristics of Ireland’s demography such as emigration, late age of marriage, high fertility within marriage but low fertility across the whole population had already been established at the beginning of the 19th century (154).

While this recent research helps put the famine into historical perspective, the question to what extent the Irish experience was unique is still controversial among historians. Hilary Tovey et al. provide a summary of the different historical positions ranging from Guinnane’s (1997) claim that other regions of Europe faced similar problems and only the particular combination of those in Ireland was unique, to Coleman (1992), who maintains the exceptionality of the Irish experience of emigration, pointing out that Ireland was the only country in the world whose population declined over the course of the 19th century (141). No matter how unique the case of Irish emigration may have been, the numbers are fairly undisputed. From the Great Famine of the 1840s to 1925, over 4 million people from Ireland left for North America alone (Tovey et al. 145).

Connolly points out that the dramatic Irish experience of emigration in the 19th century led to a specifically Irish conception of emigration that differs from that dominant in European writing, which usually treats the subject rather unemotionally, and as a part of a larger phenomenon of human movement between different regions of the world. Firstly, Connolly states, in Ireland emigration is normally perceived in isolation from overall migratory processes in which immigration is viewed as equally relevant. Secondly, emigration is treated as a uniquely Irish phenomenon and thus viewed in isolation from similar processes taking place simultaneously across Western Europe. Last but not least, emigration is portrayed as a tragic event of which the nation should be ashamed,

disregarding the fact that most of the émigrés were not forced to leave but did so voluntarily in search of a better life (Connolly 170).

Many of the parameters of Ireland's collective memory were established during the 19th century. However, while this period saw the most dramatic decline of the Irish population, emigration was not limited to the 19th century alone. The numbers continued to be high even after the creation of the Irish Free State. .

4.2. Migration Patterns after the War of Independence

For a long time, nationalist discourse had identified emigration as a problem caused by British colonialism. Self-government was thought to solve Ireland's social and economic troubles and thereby bring emigration to an end. Eamon De Valera's Fianna Fáil was the most active political force to oppose emigration. Delaney supports this claim by citing from the transcripts of a Dáil debate on 17 February 1937:

The aim of the Irish government [...] is to concentrate on utilizing the resources of this country and so improving the conditions of life here that our people will not have to emigrate, but will be able to find a livelihood in our country. (30)

Contrary to what many of those fighting for Irish independence hoped, political independence from the United Kingdom did not bring emigration to an end. From the 1920s to the 1940s, the Irish population stagnated, only to decline once again after the economic effects caused by the Great Depression and the Second World War had passed. Unlike in most of Western Europe and America, the 1950s in Ireland were not characterized by a booming economy and a rapidly rising living standard. On the contrary, the stream of people leaving the country returned to nineteenth-century levels (Tovey and Share 146). At the end of the decade, Irish population reached its all-time low, with only 2.82 million people living in the Republic in 1961. Fahey (14) points out that "the decline of the 1950s arose mainly from a contraction of population in the active age ranges as a result of heavy emigration among young adults."

The 1950s, however, were not only a period of large-scale emigration; they also marked the modest beginnings of immigration from Eastern Europe to Ireland. Fitzgerald and Lambkin (225) point to the Hungarian uprising as the start of Ireland's role as a receiving society. In November 1956, following the Soviet invasion of Hungary, Ireland offered asylum

to 541 Hungarian refugees; however, due to the lack of an appropriate legal framework and an administrative system for immigration, only a very small number of those first Eastern European immigrants actually decided to stay in Ireland permanently. Some returned to Hungary, but the majority eventually moved on to Canada.

The demographic recovery in the 1970s turned the migration pattern of the 1950s around. During this period the active-age ranges showed the most significant increase, fuelled in part by the return of almost 50,000 migrants between 1971 and 1981 (Fahey 14). Returning to Ireland became comparably easy in the post-War period, as a change in the destination of emigrants took place: Britain replaced the United States as the main destination. Hazelkorn (125) calculates that between 1876 and 1921 a large majority of 86 percent of emigrants moved to the United States, whereas only a tiny fraction of 8 percent settled in Britain. In the years following the Second World War, on the other hand, the numbers turned, with 80 percent leaving for Britain. A shift also took place within Britain; instead of the industrial North of England and Scotland, London became the economic centre and subsequently attracted the majority of the Irish immigrants.

The economic boom in the late 1960s and early 1970s caused the return of large numbers of Irish migrants. In combination with natural increase this led to a rise in population unprecedented since the 1840s (Fahey 17). In the 1980s, however, the positive trend changed once again and net-migration turned negative. Ireland's economy suffered severely from the global downturn in the 1980s, which resulted in a painful recession stretching well into the 1990s. With unemployment reaching 17 percent in 1986, emigration numbers accelerated once again to 45,000 in 1988/89 (Doyle et al., 51). In the early 1990s emigration dropped below 40,000 whereas immigration rose to a similar level, leading to a net movement around zero for the first five years of the decade (Fahey 27). It was at that time that the Celtic Tiger was born. For the second part of the decade, Ireland would experience the largest increase in net inflow it had ever seen.

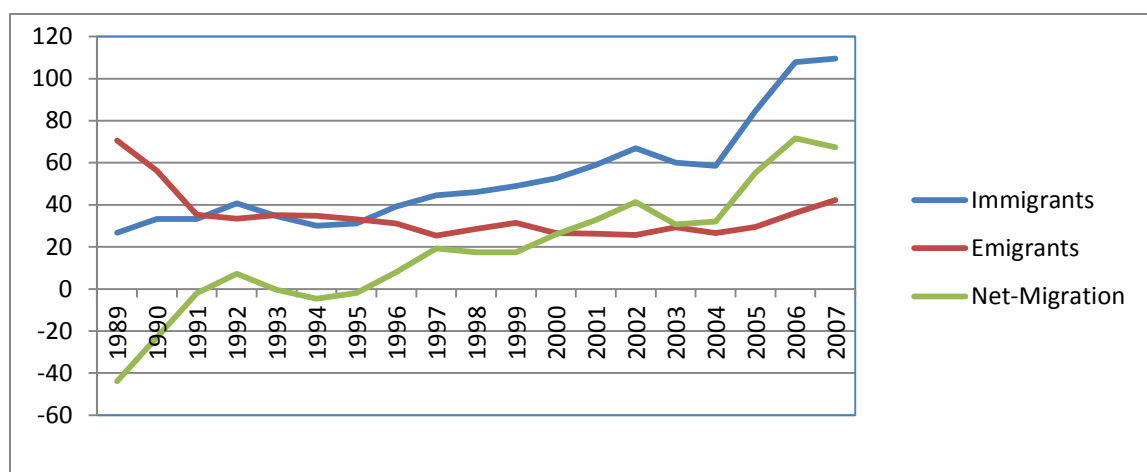
4.3 The Era of Immigration

The period from 1995 to 2000 saw a dramatic reversal of traditional migration patterns. As the Irish economy expanded, an unprecedented number of jobs were created, reducing unemployment to one of the lowest in Europe and attracting workers from abroad to seek

employment in Ireland. Initially those immigrants were mainly returning Irish but with continuing demand, rising numbers of foreign nationals applied for work permits in Ireland. This chapter outlines the changes in migration flows that took place after 1995, placing a special focus on immigration after the EU enlargement in 2004. It also introduces the reasons for migration, the demographic fragmentation and the educational background of Polish immigrants, whose numbers considerably outstripped those of the other communities.

4.3.1. Net -Immigration to Ireland after 1995

The period from 1995 to 2000 saw a dramatic rise in employment. According to CSO figures, the number of workers employed in the Irish economy rose from 1.1 million in 1988 to over 2 million by the end of 2005. At the same time unemployment decreased to only 4.2 percent (Loyal 40). A new economic policy which centred on low corporate taxes, the opening up for foreign direct investment and a knowledge economy formed the backbone of the economic miracle commonly referred to as the Celtic Tiger. Moreover, membership of the European Union offered significant economic advantages (Loyal 30-31). Mac Éinri and White (2008) remind us that within the first fifty years of the twentieth century, immigration into Ireland hardly existed. It was only after the Republic of Ireland's accession to the European Economic Community in 1973 that the first notable influx of foreigners occurred. With the exception of the early 1970s, net migration had always been negative or balanced, but almost never positive; however, in the period from 1995 to 2000 immigration numbers accelerated, following the rapid growth of the Irish economy.



(Central Statistics Office, 14.12.2007: 2)

According to Doyle et al. (51), “real annual GNP growth averaged almost 9 per cent and the estimated net jobs created totalled 389,000, or over 5 per cent on an annual average basis for the period”. The economy grew at a rate that, even though there was a steady influx of foreign workers, the size of the labour force could not keep track with the growth rate of the economy. Unemployment fell to only 4.3 percent in the year 2000, making additional immigration necessary to meet the demands of labour supply for the expanding economy. Those foreign workers originated from a wide range of other countries and came to Ireland mainly via the work permits system. The number of work permits increased dramatically between 1999 and 2003, rising from 5,750 to 47,707 annually (Ruhs 15). The majority of permits issued went to individuals from Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and the Philippines. Hence, immigration from the Baltic countries and Poland did not start with the EU enlargement, but had a longer tradition under the work permit system.

Despite the fact that large numbers of work permits were issued in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the majority of the immigrants were Irish nationals who had emigrated during the less fortunate years. In 1998 those returnees, often called “homing pigeons”, made up 53 percent of all immigrants to Ireland, the second largest number of immigrants, 19 per cent, came from the United Kingdom (Fahey 28). However, with continuous immigration, less traditional sources of immigrants gained importance. The most significant increase in net-migration occurred after the EU enlargement in May 2004, which gave the citizens of the 10 new member states the right to work and live in Ireland.

Alongside the UK and Sweden, Ireland was one of only three countries that immediately opened its labour market to workers from the new EU member nations. This decision had far-reaching effects on immigration to Ireland, and Irish society in general. The numbers of actual immigrants exceeded the estimated numbers significantly. Prior to the enlargement the EU’s Economic Policy Panel estimated that “the number of migrants from these States living in Sweden in 2005 would be about 6,700, while the number living in Ireland and the UK would be around 3,400 and 12,600 respectively” (Doyle et al. 17). Reality looked quite different. Net inward migration rose from 31,000 in 2003 to 72,000 in 2006 before moderating to 67,000 in 2007 (McCormick 143). In the first two years after the enlargement 186,000 Personal Public Service Numbers (PPSNs) – which are individual identifiers required to take up a job or access state benefits in Ireland – were allocated to

nationals of the Accession States. Consequently, by 2006, “migrants from the new member states of the EU [...] had taken over as the dominant sources of immigrants, accounting for 43 per cent of the total” (Fahey 28).

Number of PPS numbers issued to EU10 nationals 2002-2006

Year	Allocations
2002	8975
2003	8967
2004	58079
2005	107451
2006	127693

(Graph from Barrett 159)

Yet, in spite of this drastic increase, not even 1,000 nationals of the new EU member states were collecting unemployment benefits in March 2006. “Welfare tourism” was thus clearly none of the reasons why nationals of the accession states felt attracted to Ireland (Doyle et al. 60). The number of PPSNs issued suggests that EU10 immigration peaked in the second half of the year 2006. With a further 113,000 immigrants from the accession countries, the year 2007 still experienced a strong influx of EU 10 national although no longer at the level experienced in 2006.

4.3.2. Data on Asylum Seekers from 1995 to 2007

For some time before Ireland turned from a country with high numbers of emigration into a recipient of migrants, asylum seekers had already become a political issue. Even after 1995, when asylum seekers represented a fast-declining percentage of immigrants to Ireland, immigration continued to be discussed in terms of asylum-seekers. In particular during the campaign for the 2004 referendum on citizenship, hostility towards them radicalized substantially (Fanning and Mutwarasibo 442). The following table indicates the number of applications for asylum in Ireland between 1995 and 2007. The juxtaposition of these numbers with those of overall immigration serve to put them into perspective and point to the over-proportional representation of asylum-seekers in Irish media, which will be dealt with again in the course of this thesis.

Asylum Applications, 1995-2007

Year	Applications
1995	424
1996	1,179
1997	3,883
1998	4,626
1999	7,724
2000	10,938
2001	10,325
2002	11,634
2003	7,900
2004	4,766
2005	4,323
2006	4,314
2007	3,985
Total 1994-2007	76,021

Source: Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner
(cited in Quinn 12)

The table indicates the number of asylum-seekers who applied for asylum in Ireland over the period from 1995 to 2007. With a total number of 76,021 applications during this thirteen-year period, the number is only slightly higher than the number of net immigrants for the year 2006 alone and fades dramatically in comparison with the total number of immigrants during those years. The highest numbers were recorded in the early years of the millennium and had already fallen sharply before the citizenship referendum was held that placed them in the centre of public attention. Quinn (12) draws attention to the fact that the total of 3,985 applications for asylum in 2007 represented less than 4 percent of the total gross inward migration to Ireland of that year.

4.3.3. Polish Immigration in Numbers

Already in the final years before the EU enlargement, Polish citizens had been allocated the highest number of PPSNs, overtaking Latvia and Lithuania in 2003. However, after the

accession those numbers increased significantly from 3,800 in 2003 to 65,000 in 2005. Over 55 percent of all the PPSNs issued to Accession State nationals were allocated to Polish citizens (Doyle et al. 61). Poland, with a population of 40 million, was by far the largest of the accession countries; likewise, the percentage of Polish immigrants arriving to work in Ireland was also the highest. Especially the high unemployment rate of 19 percent served as a push factor. In March 2006, the Polish Embassy in Dublin estimated that about 120,000 Polish immigrants were living in Ireland at the time. This is considerably more than the 90,320 PPSNs that were issued to Polish citizens between May 2004 and December 2005 (Kropiwek 21). On that note it is important to consider that the PPSN is an unreliable basis to establish the amount of Polish people living in Ireland at that time. McCormick (144) draws attention to the fact that “the PPS figure overstates the number of migrants economically active in Ireland, as almost 1 in 4 of those of working age who received a PPS number never took up work in the country, and many of those who do work here seem to do so only on a seasonal basis.”

Reasons for migration

High unemployment and low economic growth in Poland were certainly the most important push-factors, the pull-factors, however, are manifold. For a study looking at migration to Ireland from the Polish perspective, Katarzyna Kropiwek (2006) conducted 23 interviews with Polish migrants in Ireland and concluded that there were many more reasons to go to Ireland than simply better wages. For instance, some young Poles felt attracted by the possibility “to combine studying with work for the student’s own maintenance” (28). Others pointed to the possibility to improve their English language skills, which would give them an advantage over their peers, once they returned to Poland (29). Yet others simply seek life experience and adventure (31). Hence, many young Poles are not so different from young Irish people, who might also consider migration an option, rather than a necessity. As MacLaughlin points out:

There is an increasing tendency today to treat emigration as a cultural tradition and a voluntary activity which attracts upwardly mobile individuals who are assumed to be leaving Ireland to climb social ladders abroad (31).

All those push- and pull-factors are certainly important, more recent research, however, views migration as a social process, rather than an individual decision. Siuts (14) stresses the importance of migration networks. She points out that migrants form part of those networks which mediate between the sending country and the host country. Via those networks, potential migrants acquire knowledge about the host society, which places them in a better position to estimate the costs and risks which the decision may entail. According to this theory, those networks play a more important role in the decision-making process than economic and geographical considerations.

The experiences and motivations of some Polish migrants, as recorded by Kropiwiec (29–30), are in line with this argumentation. A group of friends or family members that had already established themselves in Ireland made a new start abroad much easier than it would have been otherwise. A 25-years-old shop assistant describes it in the following way:

Because my husband came here first ... No, it started with his uncle. His uncle came here four years ago. And then, about two years ago the uncle brought my father-in-law here, and about two months later my father-in-law brought my husband here. And I allowed it, but on condition that in three months I'll come too. Because I thought that a long-distance marriage does not make sense. I couldn't imagine that he would be here and I would be in Poland. (30)

Sex, Age and Education

The balance between male and female migrants was already leaning towards males previous to EU enlargement, making up 57 per cent of the total outflow from Poland, after the enlargement; however, this trend became even more dominant in the years after the accession. Between 2004 and 2006, a percentage of 69 of Polish migrants that left for Ireland, Sweden and the UK were male. This adds up to 222 men per 100 women (Fihel and Okólski 192-193).

Not only did the balance between the sexes shift after the EU enlargement, also the average age of Polish migrants declined. Since 2004 the number of those ranked in the age range 20-24 increased from 23 to 24 per cent; those aged 25-29 increased from 22 to 29 percent and those between 30 and 34 years of age from 12 to 14 per cent. Particularly Ireland and the UK attracted a very young segment of Polish migrants: about 70 percent of the total influx was aged between 20 and 29 years. This is a significant deviation from the

patterns found in other countries of the world. In Canada, for instance, half of the migrants at the same period were aged 46 or older (Fihel and Okólski 193).

Regarding the level of education, a significant change occurred after May 2004. During the 1990s and the early years of the 2000s, the vast majority of Polish emigrants had only elementary or secondary education. The number of university graduates varied between one and two percent (Siuts 50). Even after the EU enlargement the share of those with secondary vocational and vocational education made up more than 60 per cent; however, the number of third-level educated emigrants increased to a level that justifies the use of the term “brain-drain”. Fihel and Okólski (295) calculate that after May 2004 every fifth male migrant had a university degree and even 27 percent of female migrants did. With reference to the low average age of Polish immigrants to Ireland and the UK, the data suggest that many of those highly skilled migrants never took up formal employment in their home country, but left after receiving their degrees.

4.4. Legislation on Immigration in the Republic of Ireland

Given the lack of substantial immigration to the Republic of Ireland for the biggest part of its history, legislation that regulated immigration did not move into the centre of attention until the end of the 20th century. The Alien Act of 1935 was the first important piece of immigration legislation and was inspired by the British Aliens Restriction Act of 1914 and the Restriction Amendment Act of 1919 (Loyal 35). Until recently this Act formed the legal basis for immigration and residence of non-Irish nationals in the State. One of the main characteristics of the Act was the extensive power held by the Minister of Justice, Equality and Law Reform in respect to matters concerning the entry to, departure from, movement around, and residence in the Republic of Ireland (Quinn 34). In combination with the Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act of 1935 this legislation regulated the rights of citizens and non-citizens. Citizenship was granted in a flexible manner to every person born on the island of Ireland, as well as to the children of Irish citizens (Loyal 35)

The rights to Irish citizenship became constitutional in the Good Friday Agreement of 1998, which included the right to Irish citizenship for all children born on Irish soil (*ius soli*). Irish citizenship therefore continued to be granted not only to those born in Northern Ireland, but also to the children of non-Irish nationals living in Ireland. This regulation

entitled asylum-seekers and other immigrants to remain in Ireland permanently if one of their children was Irish-born. In 1987 the High Court ruled in favour of a married couple of illegal immigrants that had appealed against their deportation because their children were Irish citizens. The Court concluded that the children had a right to family life, which made the deportation of their parents impossible (Fanning and Mutwarasibo 445).

The signing of the Good Friday Agreement also sparked a debate on Irishness. Fanning and Mutwarasibo (440) remark that, “during the 1990s the Robinson presidency sought to institutionalise a diasporic conception of Irishness. This conception implied that Irishness remained in its essence monocultural and comprised the entire Irish diaspora”. However, the time of the Agreement also coincided with the economic boom that attracted great numbers of immigrants. Even though the majority of those immigrants were foreign workers legally employed under the work permit scheme, the public discourse focused particularly on the presence of asylum-seekers (Fanning and Mutwarasibo 442). Eventually, the right of immigrants’ children to Irish citizenship became an issue and the government called a referendum which was to take place on the same day as the local elections in June 2004.

Fianna Fáil, the leading party of the coalition government, advocated the constitutional amendment to introduce the distinction between an in-group, the still predominantly mono-ethnic Irish citizens, and an out-group which comprised all “non-nationals”. They advertised this distinction under the slogan of “commonsense citizenship” pointing out that Ireland’s *ius soli* citizenship diverged from the European norm (Fanning and Mutwarasibo 446). The Progressive Democrats supported the amendment for a different reason. They pointed to the exploitation of the Irish health services by asylum-seekers and particularly ‘baby tourists’. Fanning and Mutwarasibo (441) even suggest that the party, which generally stressed the economic benefits of migration, “portrayed ‘non-nationals’ as disposable economic actors with no claim on the nation-state”.

The proposed amendment to the Constitution Act was passed on 11 June 2004 by a majority of 79 percent and a turnout of 60 percent of the electorate. Scheibner (1432) interprets the high turnout, the highest in local elections in almost twenty years, as an indicator of the Irish public’s “overwhelming wish to change citizenship rights from being determined by birth in the ROI (*jus soli*), to being born in the ROI of at least one parent who

is an Irish citizen (*jus sanguinis*).” He also draws attention to the introduction of a question in the 2006 census; the question to specify ethnic origin. This change also points to the mono-ethnic definition of Irishness and suggests that it became increasingly important whether or not an individual was ‘genuinely’ Irish or not (Scheibner 1432).

Even though the Citizenship referendum took place only one month after the enlargement of the European Union, it was primarily directed against asylum-seekers and non-EU immigrants. The amendment did affect the rights of those EU citizens that went to seek employment in Ireland after May 2004; however, as the European Union’s principle of freedom of movement applied to most of them, citizenship was none of their prime concerns. Fanning (146) refers to the experience of other EU countries which suggests that migrants from other EU member states mostly do not tend to seek naturalisation, as they do not need citizenship to obtain employment.

Unlike citizenship, social entitlements were an issue of importance with regard to the opening of the labour market for citizens of the accession states. Three months prior to the enlargement of the EU, Ireland reformed its welfare system to “protect” it from abuse by immigrants from the new member states. The Habitual Residence Condition (HRC) was introduced. Thus, having lived in the Common Travel Area (CTA) comprising Ireland, the UK, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, for at least two years became a precondition to applying for social welfare (Doyle et al. 24).

A significant piece of legislation in respect to the accession of the new member states was the EU Citizenship Directive (2004/38/EC) which came into force on 30 April 2004. It outlines the right of freedom of movement and residence within the territory of the EU member states and lays down the limitations which apply to these rights.

Union citizens have a right of residence for more than three months if they (a) are workers or self employed (sic) in the Member State, (b) have sufficient resources not to become a burden on the State, (c) are enrolled at a private or public established (sic) and have sickness insurance, and (d) are family members accompanying or joining the Union citizen. Union citizens acquire the right of permanent residence in the host Member State after a five-year period of uninterrupted legal residence. Family members of the Union citizen who are not nationals of a Member State and who have lived with a Union citizen for five years also have a right to permanent residence (Quinn 71).

Quinn (72) emphasises that the directive still offers the possibility that Member states may restrict the freedom of movement of EU citizens if this is considered necessary on grounds of public policy, public security or public health. Economic considerations are, however, exempt and may not serve as justifications for restrictions imposed on a Union citizen's right of freedom of movement. Moreover, restrictive measures must be proportional and only based on the personal conduct of an individual, not of the ethnic, religious group they belong to.

5. Methodology

The methodological foundation of this thesis is outlined in this chapter. It starts with an introduction to content analysis, explaining its key concepts and the special feature of the approach that guides the analytical part of this paper. Afterwards, an overview of the Irish print media landscape is provided and the selected newspapers the *Sunday Independent*, the *Irish Times* and the *Irish News* are located within this context. Finally, the chapter outlines the parameters that guided the corpus compilation.

5.1. Content Analysis

To analyse the data collected, this study uses the method of content analysis as outlined by Klaus Krippendorff, Philipp Mayring, Yan Zhang, Barbara M. Wildemuth, Hsiu-Fang Hsieh and Sarah E. Shannon. Content analysis has various precursors such as bible analysis, early newspaper analysis, or even Freudian interpretation of dreams; however, the scientific approach known under the label of “Content Analysis” was pioneered by sociologists Paul Lazarsfeld and Harold Lasswell in the 1920s and 1930s. From the 1960s onwards, Content Analysis became used as an interdisciplinary method, spreading into fields of humanities such as linguistics, psychology and history. Initially, Content Analysis was a quantitative approach; yet, in the second half of the 20th century new approaches with a qualitative orientation developed (Mayring 2000).

Quantitative and qualitative content analysis are by no means contradictory, Krippendorff (2004: 16) even questions the validity of the distinction between the two approaches. He argues that all readings of a text are ultimately qualitative, even if certain elements of that text have been translated into numbers. Nevertheless, the distinction is a methodological fact and each of the two approaches differs in objective.

Zhang and Wildemuth (1-2) point to three main differences between the two approaches. The main purpose of Quantitative is to count manifest textual elements; however, it is unsuitable to reveal semantic and syntactical information inherent in the text. Then again, this is exactly what qualitative approaches aim for. Qualitative content analysis seeks to uncover the meaning embedded in the text. Secondly, the two approaches differ fundamentally in respect to data sampling techniques. Whereas quantitative data must be selected by random sampling to guarantee the validity of statistical inference, qualitative data have to be selected specifically with the research question in mind. Thirdly, quantitative

content analysis ultimately expresses the results translated into numbers and statistics, whereas analysts using qualitative approaches express their findings argumentative, which makes them more vulnerable to subjectivity.

Qualitative Content Analysis, according to Zhang and Wildemuth (2), is therefore “a process designed to condense raw data into categories or themes based on valid inference and interpretation. This process uses inductive reasoning, by which themes and categories emerge from the data through the researcher’s careful examination and constant comparison.” This definition draws attention to various important elements. It suggests that drawing inferences and interpreting the data is the main purpose of content analysis. Hence, the approach ultimately seeks to understand texts by making inferences from a text’s content, language, and other characteristics. Qualitative content analysis aims to expand the approach beyond simply quantifying the frequency of words or phrases to a more integrated perspective of a text in its particular context. Thus, as Carney (25) puts it, a content analysis approach “is prepared to attempt the assessment of what is ‘written between the lines’.”

Unlike other forms of qualitative analysis, such as Critical Discourse Analysis, the content analysis approach is not a linguistic analysis of words, phrases or sentences. It seeks to categorize the content of a variety of texts into different units of analysis and then draw broader conclusions by revealing the underlying meaning embodied in the texts. From this understanding is drives Krippendorff’s (2004: 22) definition of content analysis “as a method of inquiry into *symbolic meaning* or messages”. It is therefore the symbolic meaning of a text that is at the heart of content analysis; the researcher seeks to understand this meaning by analysing the major themes and placing them within their social background.

In 1980, Krippendorff (1980: 76) claimed that “[h]ow categories are defined [...] is an art. Little is written about it.” Given the importance of the formation of categories for content analysis several theorizers, such as (Mayring 2000), took up the call and distinguished between inductive and deductive reasoning. Inductive reasoning refers to the procedure of condensing the raw data into categories; hence, a process of systematic reduction of the data from which all the categories derive. Deductive reasoning, on the other hand, specifies a process that adopts an existing theory and forms the categories according to the methodology of this theory.

In a recent article Hsieh and Shannon (2005) present three different approaches to qualitative content analysis which vary by the degree of inductive reasoning involved. The

first is referred to as conventional qualitative content analysis and employs the highest degree of inductive reasoning. The categories derive entirely from the raw data. This approach is usually used when previous research or theories about a phenomenon is limited. This form of categorisation of data allows new insights to emerge; however, it runs the risk of “failing to develop a complete understanding of the context, thus failing to identify key categories. This can result in findings that do not accurately represent the data” (1280). The second approach is directed content analysis, in which categorisation starts on the basis of an existing theory or relevant research findings. Hence, the directed approach aims to “validate or extend conceptually a theoretical framework or theory” (1281). The third approach discussed is summative content analysis. Although qualitative, this approach starts with quantifying particular words or manifest content with the aim of exploring the means to which of these words or this content is employed. The approach thus appears as quantitative first, but eventually goes beyond that stage and explores latent content analysis.

For the purpose of this study of newspaper content, Hsieh and Shannon’s directed approach to content analysis serves as the methodology. It is used by content analysts when “existing theory or prior research exists about a phenomenon that is incomplete or would benefit from further description” (1281). Existing theory is used to direct the development of a set of categories and the relationship between these categories. It relies on what Mayring (2000) defined as “deductive category application”. Hence, directed content analysis is a method that is based on an existing theoretical framework or the findings of prior research. The existing theory may help the analyst formulate a coding scheme to scrutinise the textual data or the interrelation between different themes in the text. As the units of analysis do not have to be condensed from the data during the analysis, the directed approach follows a more organized process than conventional content analysis.

The first step of the directed approach to content analysis is to identify “key concepts or variables as initial coding categories” (Hsieh and Shannon 1281) on the basis of existing theory or previous research. What follows afterwards is the collection of data, which, in the case of interviews or recordings, have to be transformed into written text. Patton (2002) observes that in the case of data deriving from existing texts, “the choice of the content must be justified by what you want to know”. Coding takes place simultaneously with data

collection; researchers read through the material “to identify and categorize all instances of a particular phenomenon”. The analyst would first highlight all such instances and only in the next step code all the selected passages according to the predetermined categories. If the pre-existing coding scheme proves insufficient, new codes may be developed that represent the data more accurately (Hsieh and Shannon 1281). The adoption of coding schemes deriving from previous studies has, as Zhang and Wildemuth (4) argue, “the advantage of supporting the accumulation and comparison of research findings across multiple studies.” They also explain that, unlike in quantitative content analysis, coding categories do not need to be mutually exclusive. It is possible to code a unit of text into more than one category; nevertheless, internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity of the categories are necessary (5). However, if a category is rather heterogeneous, researchers might opt for the construction of subcategories and analyse them separately.

After coding the entire data set, it is necessary to re-evaluate the consistency of the coding. As stated by Zangh and Wildemuth, since human coders are not entirely reliable, it is rather unlikely that the coding of a whole corpus of texts turns out to be consistent. Thus, during the process of coding, new codes might have to be added. Moreover, “the coders’ understanding of the categories and coding rules may change subtly over the time” (5). In order to avoid any of these mistakes, the consistency of the coding needs to be rechecked before the interpretation of the content begins.

The aim of the subsequent analysis is to draw conclusions from the coded data by making sense of the identified themes and categories. For this purpose, the directed approach to content analysis applies the theory that gave birth to the coding system to explore “the properties and dimensions of categories, identifying relationships between categories, uncovering patterns, and testing categories against the full range of data” (Bradley 1993, cited in Zhang and Wildemuth 5). At this stage, the analyst makes use of his reasoning abilities to uncover patterns, themes, and categories and places them within their social context.

The fact that “existing theory can be supported and extended” is what Hsieh and Shannon call the main strength of a directed approach to content analysis. By contrast, they also formulate some disadvantages of this approach. First, one of the limitations to a directed approach to content analysis is that the researchers may exhibit bias in a way that

makes them more likely to reach conclusions that support the existing theory, rather than question it. Second, an “overemphasis on the theory can blind researchers to contextual aspects of the phenomenon” (1283). This means that as researchers are focused on looking for evidence of a particular theory, they may ignore or overlook other important components of the data.

This study uses the broader theoretical framework outlined in the chapter on the perception of the East as the foundation for my directed approach to content analysis. It draws on theories established by Edward Said, Larry Wolff, Maria Todorova and Norman Davies to examine the data collected in Irish print media. Moreover, it relies on the work of Steve Garner and Brian Conway when analysing the influence Ireland’s history of emigration had on the representation of contemporary immigration in Irish newspapers. This study aims to validate and extend research on the construction of Eastern Europe and Eastern Europeans. The categorisation is directed by established historical and sociological theories; however, by focusing on the genuinely Irish perspective and by establishing a link to the historic similarities between Ireland and Eastern Europe, the study aims to add a new component to these established categories.

Apart from these categories that derive from existing historical and sociological theory, new categories were formed based on inductive reasoning. These categories comprised references that approached Eastern European immigrants as an economic commodity and generally calculated the costs and the benefits of immigration. Those references formed the basis for the second major chapter of the analysis section.

5.2. Newspapers Selected

The outlined methodology is applied to three Irish newspapers, the *Irish Times*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Irish News*. Bell (1995) names four main reasons for the continuing interest in mass media research. The first is the relatively easy access to huge amounts of data for investigation. Secondly, mass media have a considerable impact on the language used by a speech community. Thirdly, media research contributes to the understanding of how social roles are imposed on individuals and of how “definitions of basic concepts underlying our social structure and stereotypes [are] encoded in language” (Wilk 335). Last but not least, mass media mirror and influence prevailing hierarchies and

power structures in society (Bell, qtd. in Wilk 335). Keeping the interconnection between media and social power relations in mind, the following chapter starts with offering a brief introduction to the Irish newspaper market, contextualising it within Irish society. The second sub-chapter explains the interrelations between broadsheet and tabloid newspapers. Ultimately, the characterisation of the three newspapers selected for this study, the *Irish Times*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Irish News* follows. The main focus is placed on their political and social positions, as well as their circulation and readership.

5.2.1 An Overview

With more than 90 percent of the population reading a newspaper every week, Ireland has one of the highest readerships rates in Europe. O'Brien lists 6 daily titles, 2 evening titles, 10 Sunday titles, 58 regional titles, 13 local titles and 40 free local titles to illustrate the astonishing amount of newspapers produced in the Republic alone. Moreover, he also points to a large number of local and regional titles in Northern Ireland and the availability of numerous British newspapers all over Ireland (O'Brien ch. 2).

The history of Irish newspapers dates back to the middle of the 17th century. The oldest paper still in circulation is the *Belfast Newsletter*, first published in 1737. Tovey et al. emphasise that most of the Irish newspapers initially represented the positions of certain political groups, as well as their economic or social agenda (425). One of those papers was the *Irish Press*, which was founded to propagate the positions of Fianna Fáil and its leader Eamon de Valera. The collapse of the Irish Press Group in 1995 and the subsequent disappearance of three national newspapers is, according to O'Brien, an indicator for a highly competitive market where "having a prominent historical heritage and a highly respected reputation for news-gathering" (ch.2) could no longer guarantee survival.

Foley claims that up until the 1970s Irish newspapers were considered important for their part in Ireland's nation building process. Hence, they were essentially serious publications and early forms of tabloids, such as the *Sunday Review* - published from 1957 until 1963 - proved unable to find a readership. Great changes in the Irish newspaper market started to take place from the 1970s onwards. In 1972, the *Sunday World*, a tabloid imitating the British model and focusing primarily on crime and celebrity journalism was established (Foley). In 1973, the Irish entrepreneur Anthony O'Reilly purchased the *Irish Independent*

group which developed subsequently into the biggest media corporation in Ireland. Only one year later there was also a change in the ownership of the *Irish Times* which was transferred to a trust to guarantee its independence (Hogan et al, 34).

In the following years, as Hogan et al. observe, three trends were characteristic for the development of Irish media. First, internal consolidation took place, as established media companies such as the Examiner group or the Independent News and Media (INM) group purchased regional media. Second, foreign ownership increased, and third, technological advances and the advent of online media challenged the Irish market (35).

One of the most unusual features of the Irish newspaper market is the high number of British publications available at Irish newspaper kiosks. Various attempts of Irish governments to combat the presence of these titles by introducing different forms of censorship proved futile and transnational competition continued (Horgan et al., 33). O'Brien states that in the past British newspapers entered the Irish market unchanged; only in recent years Irish editions of these titles began to be circulated (ch. 1). *The Irish Sun* and *The Irish Daily Mirror* are two of those spin-offs of British newspapers. Very successful at home - *The Sun* is the highest selling paper in Britain – they could not translate that success to the Irish market. Foley points to the *Irish Daily Star*, a “very consciously Irish tabloid” which outsells them both even at a higher price. Yet, the *Irish Daily Star* is not entirely Irish either: it is collectively owned by INM and Express Newspapers in the UK and includes some articles from the British version. Nevertheless, in Foley’s view it is more than just an Irish edition of a British title.

The Sunday market shows the same features of competition between Irish and British titles. A total of 78.3 percent of the population of the Republic read a Sunday newspaper, while only 59.2 percent do so during the week; thus the Sunday market is the most competitive (O'Brien ch.1). Again Irish versions of British papers, such as the *Sunday Times* from London, take up a substantial share of the sales. On the other hand, not all the Irish daily newspapers publish a Sunday edition. Most notably, the *Irish Times* does not.

If the newspaper market in the Republic of Ireland seems competitive, the market in Northern Ireland is even more so. In a document called *Irish News Response to Government Review of Advertisement*, the newspaper claims that Northern Ireland is “one of the most

competitive daily newspaper markets in Europe”, as there are 18 daily newspapers competing with each other. These are national titles from the UK and the Republic of Ireland, as well as a number of local newspapers. The top selling titles in the North are the *Belfast Telegraph*, which is mainly read by Protestant readers, the *Irish News*, which is nationalist in outlook, and the unionist *Newsletter*.

The most recent trend in the field of newspapers is the appearance of online editions of most major papers. The market of online newspapers is considerably less competitive than that of print editions. Irish quality papers such as the *Irish Times*, *Irish Independent* and the *Irish Examiner* run very informative and well structured webpages for free. In the North only the *Belfast Telegraph* and the *Newsletter* follows suit. The *Irish News* makes its online content available to subscribers only. The Irish spin-offs of British titles present a different picture. None of them, not even the *Irish Daily Star*, have so far launched online editions of their titles. Online readers are directed to the British webpages of the original newspapers.

5.2.2. The Continuing Importance of Broadsheet Paper Analysis

It is important to clarify why this study relies almost exclusively on data from broadsheet newspapers. Krippendorff (1980: 348) points out that content analysis has a long history of analysing newspapers that are the preferred means of communication of the political elites to infer the political opinion predominant in a country. Broadsheet newspapers are seen as key players in setting political agendas and sparking public debate on controversial topics. Less prestigious and local papers are thus more likely to replicate the topics which the leading papers introduce. This is also the view that Herman and Chomsky (2002) advocate. They argue that media power takes the shape of a pyramid with elite media like the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* at the top, determining which content is worth reporting (McCullagh 142).

McCullagh disagrees with the notion that agenda setting works from top to bottom. He criticises the empirical focus of most studies on media content in broadsheet or quality press which disregards the role played by tabloid newspapers. According to him, this mistake derives from the view that due to their audience’s social and political status, the content of tabloids is less important (141). McCullagh insists that influence on agenda setting goes both ways. Hence, the quality press takes up many of the concerns that are constantly presented

as important in the tabloid media, such as paedophilia and crime. Moreover, the tabloid newspapers are leading the current trend to increasing coverage of celebrities and the relentless hunt for populist issues and controversies (141). One of those issues is constant fear-mongering in respect to asylum seekers, which prompted Garner to speak of the media as a “vital institution playing a complex role, generating representations that fuel racism and reflect and inflect debates” (159).

The interrelationship between broadsheet and tabloid newspapers is important to keep in mind when analysing broadsheet content. Nevertheless, analysing broadsheet papers separate from their less prestigious brothers is still a legitimate cause. McCullagh draws attention to Davis’ characterization of broadsheet readers as “decision-making and power-broking elites” (146). Broadsheet papers offer that elite a forum where they discuss their political and social agendas. This explains continued research on the content of papers such as the *Irish Times*, whose modest share of overall sales would not otherwise justify their important position in society.

For this study, two other considerations have played a role in the selection of the *Irish Times*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Irish News*. The first was accessibility. Copies of the selected newspapers were available at the online database LexisNexis, which facilitated access as well as the selection process by making the search for specific keywords possible. The second consideration derived from the theoretical framework of this study. Starting from the hypothesis that the historical similarities between the Irish and parts of Eastern Europe are reflected in the discourse on the new members of the EU and the immigrants originating from there, it was necessary to select genuinely Irish newspapers, which rules out almost the entire British-influenced tabloid press. In the case of Northern Ireland, the *Irish News* as the leading Irish national title was the best possible choice on the same principles.

5.2.3. Circulation and Readership

The Sunday Independent

The *Sunday Independent* is the Sunday version of the *Irish Independent* which developed at the end of the 19th century when a number of Irish newspapers merged. Foley classifies it as traditionally mid-market-oriented and conservative with strong ties to the Catholic Church.

Although its loyalty to “the traditional sources of authority in Ireland” (Foley) has eroded considerably, it still remains a conservative paper. According to JNRS (Joint National Readership Survey) data from 2005, the *Irish Independent*, the highest selling and most widely read daily newspaper in the Republic of Ireland, reaches a daily audience of 566.000 readers; 16.9 percent of Irish readership. The *Sunday Independent* has an even higher share of readership than the daily edition. In 2005 every Sunday 1.33 million readers, 33.8 percent of the total, opted for the *Sunday Independent*, making it by far the most widely read of Ireland’s weekly newspapers. Correspondingly, circulation is also twice as high as that of the daily title. Recent data from the *Irish Independent*’s webpage speak of approximately 254.000 copies in 2010.

The *Sunday Independent* forms part of the Independent News and Media group (INM) which has a 48% share in all newspaper sales in the Republic of Ireland. With the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Evening Herald* it owns the highest- selling titles in the daily, Sunday and evening categories. In addition to that, it has a share in a number of other newspapers such as the *Irish Daily Star*, the *Sunday World*, the *Irish Sunday Star* and the *Sunday Tribune* (O’Brien ch.2). The Republic of Ireland is however not INM’s only market. As a global company it owns media businesses in Australia, India, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom (Foley). With the *Belfast Telegraph*, it also owns Northern Ireland’s bestselling newspaper. The dominant position of the Independent News and Media group within Ireland’s newspaper market has continuously attracted criticism and further expansion has been repeatedly prevented by completion law (Hogan et al., 36-37).

The Irish Times

The other major broadsheet newspaper selected for this study is the *Irish Times*. Founded in 1859, as a Protestant paper supporting the Union, it is the oldest national newspaper in Ireland. Since the middle of the 20th century, as Foley explains, the newspaper has taken a more liberal stance comparable to that of other major European broadsheets such as “the *Guardian* of London, *Le Monde* or *Liberation* of Paris, or *El Pais* of Madrid”. Since the 1970s, the paper has been owned by a non-profit trust. It is not identified with any particular political party or ideology and has a rather homogenous readership that largely comprised of urban, middle-class individuals (Conway 82).

The *Irish Times* is a Dublin-based paper, selling a daily edition in Ireland and an international edition in some European countries such as England, Spain and Belgium; moreover, as the most distinguished Irish newspaper it is also available in many foreign newspaper sections of libraries throughout the English-speaking world (Conway 82). According to JNRS figures the *Irish Times* had a readership of 341.000 during the period of research that is 10.2 percent of all adults older than 15 years. Recent data suggest that the readership declined only marginally to 339.000, yet due to an increasing population the percentage fell to 9.6 in 2010. Current data from the *Times'* webpage ("Readership") indicate circulation at an average of 105.742 copies per day in 2009/10.

The Irish News

According to the *Irish Media Dictionary and Guide* (Shaw), the *Irish News* is directed primarily at the nationalist community of Northern Ireland. It was first published in 1981 and is currently owned by the Fitzpatrick family of Belfast (253). The *Irish News* was equally affected by falling numbers in readership and circulation, just like the *Irish Times* and the *Sunday Independent*. Currently circulation stands at 44.222 and readership at 168.000, according to the newspaper website. This is a considerable decline from a circulation of about 50.000 and a readership of 192.000 in 2005. Nevertheless, the *Irish News* claims to be an exception from a severely negative trend in Northern Ireland's print media. Its online *media pack* points out that, unlike the *Belfast Telegraph* and the *Newsletter*, who lost 58 and 54 percent of their readership between 1995 and 2010, respectively, the *Irish News* has actually increased its own by 5 percent during the same period.

The *Irish News* has most of its readership in the rural parts of Northern Ireland. As the *media pack* states, only 31 percent of its copies are read in Greater Belfast, the remaining 69 percent in the rest of Northern Ireland. The religious denomination of the readership offers an even sharper contrast. According to the *Irish News Response to Government Review of Advertisement* 90 percent of the newspapers readers are Catholics and only 9 percent Protestants. This is particularly important bearing in mind the very different representations of Eastern Europe in literature produced by Protestant and Catholic writers. The former perceiving the East in negative terms, comparing it with an Ireland where they feel out of place, the latter, however, stressing the similarities and historical parallels.

5.3. Corpus Compilation

In order to derive a feasible sample from the abundant amount of newspaper data, the period under scrutiny had to be limited to a manageable duration and similarly articles that did not provide relevant data had to be rejected. The following two chapters outline the principles that guided this limitation process.

5.3.1. Period under Scrutiny

The period of study stretches from May 2004 until the end of 2006 and was marked by far-reaching social and cultural changes in Irish society. Yet, as pointed out before, the notion that an entirely homogeneous society was suddenly confronted with large-scale immigrations is in many ways inaccurate. Immigration did not start with the enlargement of the European Union; under the work permit system large numbers of foreign workers had already arrived in Ireland. Despite the fact that a high level of immigration was already in place before the 10 new member states joined the EU, this study uses the first of May 2004 as its starting point. The date is relevant, because until then, the Irish government had the means to regulate immigration by the number of work permits it issued, after May 2004, however, every EU citizen had the right to seek employment in Ireland. Even more importantly, the number of Eastern Europeans and particularly Polish citizens, who are central to this study, increased dramatically in relation to other migrant groups.

Unlike the starting point of the study, the end of the period is not marked by a distinctive date. Two factors played a role in the decision to limit the period under study to two and a half years. The first one is of a practical, the second of an economic nature. First, the output of two and a half years of two daily and one weekly newspapers presents a sample of almost two thousand copies. It is thus unlikely that adding another year would lead to the discovery of completely different discursive features. On the economic side, the argument is more complex and closely connected to the economic crisis of recent years. Loyal (45) identifies the question “whether non-Irish nationals are displacing Irish workers” as one of the dominant questions in the debate concerning the impact of the Irish government’s decision to open the job market to workers from the new member states of the EU. The crucial question is therefore whether foreign workers competed with the Irish for jobs and pushed them into unemployment, or whether they simply took positions that

could not be filled with native workers anyway. The unemployment rate of the time is clear proof that displacement was not the case. It rose only marginally from 4.3% to 4.5% between 2004 and 2007. An analysis of the Irish employment market of that period found that those non-EU 15 nationals and Irish nationals entering the job market, 129,000 and 143,000 respectively, took up employment in different sectors. The construction sector and most service sectors experienced an employment increase for both Irish and foreign-workers, whereas in the hotel and restaurant sector, the manufacturing sector and the agricultural sector employment increase was almost entirely due to immigration (McCormick 149) Therefore McCormick (149) concludes that a “replacement” effect was at work rather than a “displacement”, as Irish workers were less inclined to seek employment in these sectors, due to relatively low wages and irregular working hours.

Hence, up until 2007 displacement was not a big threat in Ireland and unemployment was among the lowest in Europe. This is true for the entire period under scrutiny; it changed, however, soon afterwards. In spring 2008 McCormick (151) noticed that the “Irish labour market is entering a new era of more subdued jobs growth and higher unemployment”. He concludes that in this context displacement became a serious risk, just as the ability of those Irish workers losing their jobs in the construction sector to return to the sectors from which they had been replaced became an issue. Considering these economic factors, this paper does not venture into a period when an economic slowdown and rising unemployment might have altered the discourse on immigration.

5.3.2. Data Selection

Data collection in the case of the three newspapers selected was done via the online database LexisNexis using the search terms “migration” “immigration”, “immigrant”, “Eastern Europe”, “Eastern European”, “Poland”, and “Polish”. These rather broad terms resulted in approximately 200 hits per month in the case of the *Irish Times*; 50 to 70 for the other two titles. During some months, however, the number of articles found deviated considerably from the average. This was due to particularly newsworthy events happening in Eastern Europe such as the Orange Revolution in the Ukraine in November 2005, or even more so, the death of Pope John Paul II in April 2005.

Understandably, the number of relevant articles found with those vague search terms was too large to be dealt with in a research paper of this scope. Krippendorff (2004: 250) explains that in the case of an abundant population of possible texts, a content analyst may hand-pick a representative sample. He points out that the standard approach to sampling is to select a balanced sample of texts and start analysis with regard to the research question. If the sample fails to answer the question, one has to continue selecting more data “sample until the questions are either answered with reasonable certainty or proceeding becomes hopeless” (2004: 250). Wodak agrees that data collection is not a specific phase in qualitative media analysis. During the process of forming categories a new question might arise which makes further selection or the re-examination of earlier data necessary (27).

According to Yadgar (60) editorial and opinion pieces offer the most direct and explicit access to the interpretative elements of an issue and thus reveal attitudes and prejudices more overtly than news reports (qtd. in Conway 81-82). The LexisNexis database provides no mechanism to specify the section of the newspaper under scrutiny; hence, hand selection was inevitable. News reports were not completely discarded; however, most of the relevant data were found in editorials, opinion articles and letters to the editor. All those texts are expected to hold the key to the construction of the discourse on Eastern European immigration in the papers selected. Conway (82), however, warns that newspaper discourse does not automatically equal public opinion, nor do opinion pieces serve as “the mouthpiece of cultural elites”, even though journalists tend to express certain ideologies that are close to that of the cultural elites.

6. Historical Discourse

6.1. References to Historical Similarities between Ireland and Eastern Europe

As shown in chapter 3.2. comparisons of political events in Ireland with similar events in Poland and Eastern Europe have been a recurrent feature in Irish media and politics during the 19th century. Yet, back then, Eastern Europe served mainly as a code for Ireland. By pointing to the suffering of nations that shared a similar fate to that of Ireland in the United Kingdom, Irish writers and politicians could effectively emphasise the maltreatment of their nation. Direct contact between the peoples of Eastern Europe and Ireland hardly ever existed until the end of the 20th century. Only from the mid-1990s onwards and particularly since May 2004, Eastern Europeans, due to immigration, entered into direct contact with the Irish people. This chapter starts analysing references to historical similarities made from the Irish perspective; it continues with the Polish view on these similarities and ultimately draws attention to references that deal with the particular case of Northern Ireland.

6.1.1. Irish Perspectives on Historical Similarities

Most of the references to historical, cultural and religious similarities with Eastern European countries were made with specific reference to Poland. This trend could, on the one hand, be explained simply by numbers, as Polish citizens were by far the biggest single group of immigrants that left their home in order to look for work in Ireland after the enlargement of the European Union. However, on the other hand, plenty of evidence in articles suggests that Irish sympathy for Poland, so openly expressed in 19th century sources, persisted throughout the course of the 20th century and still influences the current perception of Poland.

In an article on the close relations between Ireland and Spain, Mansergh also mentions Poland as one of the countries particularly dear to the Irish people. He claims that “[a]mong countries that joined the European Union since Ireland, with which there is a close affinity, two large ones, Spain and Poland, figure prominently” (“Spain” 16). Whereas Spain earned this affection for being a “source of succour and refuge to Irish exiles”, Poland sticks out because it shared a similar historical legacy with Ireland: Poland was “brutally dismembered only a few years before Ireland was subsumed into the United Kingdom”.

Mansergh also argues that a shared Catholic religious belief system also played an important part in establishing an understanding of similarity between the three nations.

The connection between Ireland and Poland on the basis of their shared Catholic religion featured particularly often during the period under scrutiny; mostly, not surprisingly, in articles that dealt with the death of the Polish Pope John Paul II. In an obituary for the late Pope in the *Irish News*, the Catholic priest Denis Faul goes so far as to equate Ireland and Poland. He starts his article with the following words:

“Ireland is Poland of the west; Poland is Ireland of the east”. The two countries are strikingly similar in their history, the struggle of the people for freedom and independence, an end to religious persecution and the battle for the minds of the young people for Christian dedication and morality against secularism, imperialism, communism and fascism. (“Pontiff” 2).

The first sentence, which appears to be a quotation from John Paul II, strongly resembles similar statements from 19th-century sources such as the above mentioned description of Ireland as “the Poland of the sea” (cited in Healy 107-108). However, while 19th-century authors referred to Ireland’s struggle for independence from the United Kingdom, Faul seems to have a particular part of Ireland and a more recent history in mind, namely Northern Ireland. Shortly afterwards Faul makes a direct reference to the Troubles. He points out that by stressing the value of mercy and forgiveness, the Pope knew the “solution to the problems of Northern Ireland, which were so similar to those of his own country, Poland” (“Pontiff 2”).

That the late Pope was not only a spiritual, but at the same time a political leader fighting against the rule of Communism in Eastern Europe, was further stressed in an article that appeared in the *Sunday Independent*. Again the paragraph starts with a similar metaphor.

Wojtyla was Poland; the human embodiment of the country that saw the worst of the 20th century. I’ll shed a tear of solidarity here in honour of Wojtyla’s dogged defence of the rights of small nations to go about their business unmolested in the world; only an admirer of some of de Valera’s earliest speeches could recognise the excellence of his commitment to genuinely collective security. (McCarthy “Man the Magician”)

Here again an obvious link between Poland and Ireland is established. The “tear of solidarity” most likely refers to the Polish trade union *Solidarność* (Solidarity), which was

actively supported by the Vatican and is widely considered a crucial institution in initiating the fall of communism in Eastern Europe (Davies 1996: 1122). Hence, the reference to de Valera's earliest speeches constructs a relationship between Ireland's fight against Great Britain and Poland's fights against the Soviet Union.

The Pope's death, however, was not the only reason why Irish newspapers drew particular attention to the Polish Catholic Church. Unlike Denis Faul, who saw similarities in the two countries' "battle for the minds of the young people for Christian dedication and morality against secularism" ("Pontiff" 2), Kate Holmquist from the *Irish Times* saw this battle for young Christians at very different stages. She writes that "Ireland is not much different from Poland, but it is different enough" ("Saints" 3). She points out that the young Irish are no longer as devout as young Polish people are. Consequently, churches in Ireland turned into one of the locations where great numbers of Polish immigrants made an appearance in the public space and Polish priests swiftly followed to cater for those communities.

Again, the situation of Polish believers in Ireland invites comparison with Ireland's history of emigration. Holmquist draws attention to Irish priests that had followed their communities to America or the UK and actively sought new arrivals at airports or bus stations to welcome them and provide assistance. Likewise, the Polish Catholic Church served as an important contact point for Polish immigrants arriving in Ireland, offering support and social services. Gerry Kane, the Dublin Diocese's coordinator for foreign nationals, points to these common traits in the two countries' experience of migration. He accentuates the impressive "speed with which they are getting their act together. For our part, we are well-equipped to support the Polish community due to our own experience of emigration" (qtd. in Holmquist "Saints" 3). Kane, however, does not only see similarities between the Catholic Church in Ireland and in Poland in dealing with large-scale emigration, he also claims that there is a special understanding between the two nations that derives from their troubled histories. "Poland too has had the experience of poverty and oppression by a foreign power, so I think we understand each other".

That not everybody shares the opinion that the Irish and the Polish histories are so very much alike is, however, expressed in an article by Peter Cunningham ("An Irishman's Diary" 15) in which the contrasts between Poland and Ireland are explored. He states that

Ireland and Poland have many similarities – both are strongly identified with the Catholic faith; both have known centuries of oppression at the hands of stronger neighbours – but the contrast between them may be more notable than the likenesses.

The contrast Cunningham is talking about is to be found in the status of the Catholic Church in the two countries. While in Poland church attendance is the highest in Europe, in Ireland fewer than 40 percent of the Catholics in urban areas continue to attend Mass on Sundays. Historically, however, as Cunningham points out, Poland has long been on the faster track to secularisation. As early as 1573, it removed the dominance of the Catholic Church from its constitution. What followed was a period of high religious tolerance. The most noticeable consequence of which was that by beginning of the 19th century half the Jews in the world lived in Poland. Cunningham contrasts this development in Poland with Ireland's constitution of 1937, which stressed the special position of the Catholic Church in Irish society.

In a later part of the article, Cunningham again juxtaposes two historical events in order to highlight the contrasts between Ireland and Poland. He states that in Ireland "the Penal Law of 1695 turned the Catholic Church into an underground movement". In Poland, by contrast, the Catholic Church never went underground, not even under Communism.

What can be observed here is a frequent feature of the discourse on Polish immigration to Ireland. Journalists tend to pick from the vast range of historical events whatever suits their argument best. In Cunningham's case it is striking how he compares historical events that happened more than 300 years apart from each other. By referring to the Irish constitution of 1937, he neglects the fact that even in Ireland the close interrelation between the Catholic Church and the Irish nation developed during the 19th century. At the beginning of the 19th century, church attendance in Ireland was much lower than at the end. Here, Cunningham, like many contemporary Irish journalists, employs historical references not for their educational value or accuracy, but to underline a particular social or political argument.

The same feature can be observed in another article by Martin Mansergh, in which he criticises calls for a re-introduction of work permits for workers from the new Eastern European EU member states. These calls were voiced by the Labour party's Pat Rabbitte and attracted criticism from various parts of society. Mansergh supports his argument with data such as the unemployment rate and the latest reviews of the Economic and Social Research

Institute (ESRI) to justify free access to the Irish labour market throughout the article; however, ultimately he also resorts to a historical argument to emphasise his point in the last paragraph by referring to the Dublin lock-out of 1916 and thereby invoking a sense of historical legitimisation for his argument.

The insidious suggestion that work permits should be reconsidered for migrants from the EU member states with the crude reminder that there are 40 million Poles was not a glorious moment in the history of the Irish labour movement, and has little in keeping with the spirit of 1913 or James Connolly, who expressed a particular empathy for Poland. (“Introduction” 16).

All those remarks from the selected newspapers suggest that the close similarities of Irish and Polish history do not need much explanation. They are mostly presented as common sense and little evidence of divergent views on those issues was found in the collected data. The fact that even Holmquist starts her argument on the differences between the Irish and the Polish Catholic Church with the sentence “Ireland is not much different from Poland” (“Saints” 3) is quite telling about the extent to which this statement represents a dominant discourse. This discourse is, however, strictly limited to Poland and in no way extended to other Eastern European countries with substantial immigration to Ireland, such as Latvia and Lithuania. As for Hungary, the other Eastern European nation that served historically as a comparison with Ireland, a judgement about whether or not those similarities are still in the collective memory of the Irish nation is not possible due to the lack of substantial Hungarian immigration to Ireland.

6.1.2. Polish Immigrants’ Perspective of Historical Similarities

The discourse on historical similarities between Ireland and Poland is not limited to the Irish perspective alone. Polish immigrants tend to refer to the same similarities whenever they are given a voice in Irish media. In an article called “A blending of two cultures”, an unnamed Polish priest recounts his experiences and the difficulties of settling in Ireland. He emphasises that the similarities between the two countries facilitated this process because the “Irish, I think, have a history and a mentality that is very similar and I think that is why the Polish feel somehow at home here” (13). The same opinion is expressed in an article by Kathryn Hayes which reports on the introduction of a Polish community news section in a Limerick based provincial newspaper. The section is published in English and Polish and

meant to bring the Polish community together and assist their integration into Irish society. One of the initiators of the project, a Polish woman called Berta Malkowsak, explains the relations between the Irish and the Poles in almost the same words as the Polish priest.

I think the two people are quite similar in their sense of humour and mentality. The history is similar with independence and struggles that went on for ages. There is also the Catholic tradition in both countries. ("Paper to" 2)

History, mentality and religion are the common traits pointed out by both the priest and Ms Malkowsak. Generally Polish interviewees keep their references to similarities between the two nations very vague. None of them backed their comparison with more specific data. This suggests yet again that just like the Irish the Poles also consider those references common knowledge that need not further explanation. "You had England, we had Russia and Germany" (O'Dwyer "Having" 17), is the most specific reference to a shared historical experience that emerged in the newspapers selected.

The Polish MEP and former Polish foreign minister Bronislaw Geremek also takes a special bond between Ireland and Poland for granted. In an interview with Deaglán de Bréadún he talks about the economic benefits of migration for Ireland and hints that the Poles are the best choice for Ireland because of the two countries' special relationship.

I hope that it's a win-win situation for Poles and for the Irish people. Poles are bringing now a knowledge – sometimes doctors, dentists, nurses – coming well prepared, well educated. Poles are bringing also technical knowledge. The majority of European countries need immigration of manpower and it's not bad to have such immigration from a country with the *same culture, feeling of history and values*". [my emphasis] (Bréadún "MEP" 10)

Referring to a win-win situation, this quote reveals more than just the belief in a special bond between Poland and Ireland. It points to a more modern conception of migration. Unlike the Poles and the Irish of the 19th century, who had to emigrate to flee poverty political and religious persecution, modern migrants are well educated and thus add value to the Irish economy.

6.1.3. Similarities of Eastern Europe with Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland holds a particular place in the discourse on similarities with Eastern Europe. Unlike the Republic of Ireland, which is often specifically linked to Poland, Northern Ireland is

frequently compared with the whole of Eastern Europe under communism. Eastern Europe, in this particular context, is reduced to a uniform entity that is subjected by a dominant foreign power: either Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union.

Two particularly interesting examples of this comparison are found in a couple of letters to the editor of the *Irish News* from September 2004. The two letters mirror a controversy between two Irish Republicans over the meaning of the Good Friday Agreement. The author of the first letter (O'Neill "Wolfe Tone" 9) expresses the opinion that there is an alternative to the "so-called Belfast agreement". This alternative would be that the British "declare their intent to withdraw" from the island of Ireland and that all "political prisoners" be freed.

According to him there can never be real peace and justice as long as the British have a say in Ireland. Moreover, he accuses those among Irish Republicans that supported the agreement of "lining up to take the English money, once called the English shilling" and of helping the English to rule Northern Ireland through the parliament in Stormont. After a final appeal to the Irish people to join Republican Sinn Fein he ends his letter citing Wolfe Tone's call to "[B]reak the English connection. Then Catholics, Protestants and Dissenters can live in true peace with justice and freedom on this island called Ireland, please God".

The second letter ("Good Friday" 7) followed within days to counter the accusation of betrayal. The author, who refers to himself as "Ex-Long Kesh prisoner", argues for the Good Friday Agreement and accuses O'Neill of undemocratic behaviour, emphasising that an overwhelming majority of the Irish people "95 per cent on the 26 counties endorsed it – as did 73 per cent in the six counties". Ultimately he reminds O'Neill that he is free to "put his policies before the people" at the following election to test his support.

The most striking thing about these two letters, however, is that they both draw on Eastern European history to underline their arguments. In the first letter O'Neill justifies his conviction that peace could only return to Ireland if the British "occupying forces" left the island. He sees a parallel to this situation in Eastern Europe.

Nor did freedom return to eastern European countries invaded by the Soviet Union after the Second World War until the Berlin wall came down and Russia (sic) occupying forces withdrew. Why should it be different in this country?

The author of the second letter also used an example of Eastern European history to emphasise that the political situation in Northern Ireland had changed and that Adams' and McGuinness' support for the agreement was in no way a selling out of republican principles. According to him,

In the good old days, the six counties were run like a Stalinist, one party state – as Poland, Romania, Hungary or Yugoslavia used to be. Not any more! (sic)"

The fact that in two letters by Irish Republicans that argue for very different objectives, both employ references to Communism in Eastern Europe to describe British rule in Ireland, suggests that this comparison is a reoccurring feature in Northern Irish discourse on oppression. The point in which the two letters differ is therefore not in their perception of British rule as Soviet-style oppression but in the stance on whether or not this oppression has ended with the Belfast agreement.

Comparison of Northern Irish events to historical events from Eastern Europe is not restricted to the North alone. In a *Sunday Independent* article by Eoghan Harris on the political situation in Northern Ireland the author writes

[...], a deal between Paisley and Adams is no sort of prize. Most people in Northern Ireland view it with the same apprehensions as the people of Eastern Europe viewed the 1940 (sic) Molotov-Ribbentrop plan between Stalin's Russia and Nazi Germany: a foul deal which left a poisoned legacy that still undermines Ukraine's relationship with Romania. ("We should")

No matter what Paisley and Adams might have secretly agreed on, the comparison with the plan which initiated the Second World War is certainly a grave exaggeration. Comparisons with Nazi Germany are often too easily employed; possibly because the Second World War is a period with which many people are familiar. Yet, precisely because almost everybody has an opinion on the Nazis and inevitably on the Holocaust, any such comparison is likely to stand outside the dominant discourse.

In one such instance, the President of the Republic of Ireland caused angry reactions by drawing just that kind of controversial comparison. At an event to commemorate the liberation of Auschwitz in January 2005 Mary McAleese implicitly compared the Holocaust and sectarian violence against Catholics in Northern Ireland. What she said was:

But they [the Nazis] gave their children an irrational hatred of Jews in the same way that people in Northern Ireland transmitted to their children an irrational hatred, for example, of Catholics, in the same way that people give to their children an outrageous and irrational hatred of those who are of different colour and all those things. (“President McAleese” 7)

These remarks were a step too far even for a discourse that generally seems to allow comparisons between the events in Northern Ireland and the atrocities committed in Eastern Europe during WWII and beyond. McAleese received a lot of criticism from the *Irish Times*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Irish News* alike. In a *Sunday Independent* article (“President made a huge blunder”) the author objects to parallels drawn by the President which implied that Northern Irish Protestants shared a characteristic with the Nazis. Her remarks are described as “unbalanced and unjustified” because they ascribe the responsibility for the Troubles solely to the Protestant community and turn a blind eye on the atrocities committed by the IRA. In President McAleese’s case, most commentators objected foremost to the one-sided blame put on the Protestant community and only later to the connection she made between the Nazi’s irrational hatred of Jews and sectarian hatred in Northern Ireland. The *Sunday Independent* agreed that she was right to “give the Holocaust some contemporary relevance” (“President made”) and simply objected to the way the comparison was expressed.

An article by Fintan O’Toole points out that McAleese’s comparisons between contemporary events in Northern Ireland and the Nazi crimes are not isolated incidences (“Comparison with” 16). The occasion which prompted O’Toole to write his article was a claim by the Irish priest Alec Reid that the Catholic community in Northern Ireland was treated “like the Nazis treated the Jews” (Reid cited in O’Toole 16). O’Toole aims to set things straight by reporting on the history of the Polish city of Wroclaw and outlining the considerable differences between the events that happened in this part of Europe during the Second World War and the Troubles in Northern Ireland. O’Toole starts by asking two rhetorical questions.

How could you possibly explain to a Pole that these remarks echoed a reasonably similar statement by our President on World Holocaust Day, and that this combination of historical ignorance and monumental self-pity is far from rare? How could you possibly explain that Irish nationalists, who are thought to be so steeped in the past, know so little about the recent history of the continent they inhabit?

To answer these questions O'Toole provides a short overview of the events that unfolded during the Second World War in the city which was then known under the German name of Breslau. He describes how the Jewish population of the town was first moved to the suburbs and later transported to concentration camps and how later also the Polish population was expelled from the city. At the end of the war the surviving German population – 170.000 civilians had died in the course of the siege – was forced to leave their homes and replaced with a new Polish population. Thus O'Toole urges that anybody inclined to draw comparisons between the Nazi ruled Eastern Europe and Northern Ireland should at least understand the proportions of these events. He states that “any Irish person should have an intrinsic knowledge that the very real suffering of Catholics in Belfast or Derry don't even begin to compare with those of the Germans in a city like Wroclaw, never mind those of the Jews” (“Comparison 16).

All these examples suggest that, unlike comparisons with Nazi Germany, historical comparisons with Eastern Europe under communism are regarded as justified, even though, considering the “famine genocide” (Sternberg 67) in the Ukraine or the massacre of Katyn (see Davies 1996, 1004), those comparisons equally lack sense of proportion. They are employed uncritically and with little reflection on what the Soviet dictatorship really meant for the people of Eastern Europe. Comparisons with the rule of the Nazis, particularly if they touched on the sensitive issue of the Holocaust, are viewed much more critically, as evident in the reactions to McAleese's remarks. One thing is obvious though, comparisons with the Soviet Union or Nazi Germany are almost exclusively made in respect to Northern Ireland. The comparisons between the whole island of Ireland and Poland, on the other hand, are more likely to refer to 19th-century history and the common experience of Catholicism.

6.2. Ireland as One Step Ahead of Eastern Europe

A slightly different discourse on historical similarities starts from the premise that, even though Ireland and Eastern Europe shared many characteristics in the past, the current economic and political statuses of the two vary considerable. Thus, there must have been a point when they parted ways and Ireland advanced more rapidly than those countries. According to Hugo Hamilton this moment was in 1973, when Ireland and the UK joined the European Union. Nobody could have illustrated the meaning of this event better than

Hamilton, drawing from his personal experience, in an article entitled “Welcome to the Club”.

Shortly after we joined the EU in 1973, I queued up for a work permit in Berlin along with people from Turkey, Greece, Yugoslavia, Morocco, all waiting for permission to take part in the great German economic miracle of that time. You could see by the smoke in the waiting room how long it was going to take. Men fidgeting with worry beads. Men dressed up in suits to make a good impression. Whole families with children having their lunch while they waited their turn.

Then, out of the blue, I found my name being called ahead of everyone else and went forward to the hatch. "You're Irish," they were telling me. "You're in the EU now, aren't you?"

There was no need for me to line up with the others. I was swiftly given a beautiful, grey-blue work permit for an indefinite period of time. It replaced a tattered three-month permit which had just run out and had taken a full two days to get. I tried to suppress the Irish smile on my face as I walked back through the crowded waiting room, past the men in the corridor staring at me with quiet envy. (“Welcome” 50)

In 1973 Ireland joined the club of the wealthiest economies of Europe. The Irish could from now on skip the line in a waiting room whose doors were still closed to most Eastern Europeans. Hamilton thus depicts Ireland as 30 years ahead of Eastern Europe. Since it joined in 1973 strong economic growth has propelled it on the same level with the richest countries of the world. It is therefore no surprise that the notion that the new members of the European Union could learn from the Irish experience is a very frequent feature of Irish discourse.

Already on 1 May 2004, the day of the enlargement of the European Union, Mansergh asserted that the accession countries “look across Europe to Ireland as a model for rapid development” (“A day” 16). He also claims that the new member states will need a long period of continuing growth to close the economic gap between them and the richer states just as Ireland had done in the preceding decades. The *Irish News* reports on a study by Harvard academic Francois Vigier, who believes that Ireland’s economic growth over the last decades and particularly its “work to create greater crosscommunity (sic) and cross-border cooperation can be an example to the rest of the world” (“Harvard” 18). Vigier explains his interest in Ireland on the ground that the country used to have a depressed economy but took advantage of EU membership to reform its economy. Hence, Ireland is

“now looked upon by eastern countries as an example of something they can emulate” (Vigier, cited in “Harvard” 18).

At the time of the enlargement, Garret FitzGerald also shared the dominant view that the new member states are several steps behind Ireland on the way to economic prosperity; however, he believed that, for several reasons, they will not gain as much from EU membership as Ireland did. First of all, he points to the painful process of adjusting Eastern European economies to the market system. This process “involves an initial sharp fall in output and living standard before the benefit of access to new markets could accrue” (“New EU” 16). He holds that the accession countries are already about to finish this liberalisation; yet, it is an extra effort that Ireland did not have to make. Moreover, the situation of the global economy has changed dramatically since Ireland joined the Union. Significantly reduced external tariffs offer a much smaller advantage for the accession countries to increase their exports as had been the case in the 1970s. Another major factor is that the new members will not get as much financial assistance as Ireland did. Especially the benefit they can secure from the EU Structural Funds will be considerably lower. FitzGerald holds that these funds “for over 20 years added almost 5 per cent annually to [Ireland’s] GNP” (“New EU” 16). Finally he stresses the differences in the demographic distribution. Unlike Ireland, which had over 30 percent of under 14-year-olds in 1973, the new member states have only 17 percent of their population in this age range.

Two years after the ten mainly Eastern European states joined the EU, at a time when large-scale emigration from those countries was already taking place, the Irish owner of a Polish pub in Dublin also expressed ideas that placed Ireland and Poland on the same development scale separated by a period of 20 years. He stated, “[t]hey are suffering the same sort of brain drain as we had 20 years ago, with their educated young people – good educations in IT, medicine, engineering – all moving away. It does remind me of that time, and their attitude, the air of enthusiasm to get work and work hard. It is very similar, except their economy is also 20 years behind ours” (cited in O’Dwyer “Having” 17).

The evidence suggests that Eastern Europe was perceived as economically backwards, yet travelling on the same route to modernisation as Ireland did. The economy is, however, only one aspect on which Eastern Europe has to catch up on. In Hamilton’s view, the new member states have to go through “the same post-colonial discussion about their

national character" ("Welcome" 50) as Ireland at the time it joined. He reminds his readers of the debate that was led back then on whether joining the EU was beneficial for Ireland or not. Whether the Irish people would lose their independence and their national identity; whether they would "stop singing republican ballads one day and forget all the business about nationhood for which [their] forefathers fought so dearly, only to become Europeans like everyone else?" ("Welcome" 50).

Hamilton points to the exact same debates being lead in Eastern Europe. The peoples that have just recently broken free from Soviet domination are cautious not to cede part of their recently won sovereignty. While they are anxious to be perceived as individual countries instead of being lumped together under the common heading of Eastern Europe, or even worse, Eastern Bloc, they are concerned about signing up to another political institution that might "bring even more bureaucracy than the Soviet Union did" ("Welcome" 50). All those question have been answered for Ireland, says Hamilton, as he again stresses Ireland's function as a role model for the new accession states and urges them to follow the Irish example which "placed [Ireland] on the map, culturally and economically". He concludes that in the end "it was the opposite of isolation, the integration into a larger mix of cultures that allowed [our] Irishness to flourish".

Yet again, the discourse of Ireland as a role model for Eastern Europe was almost exclusively restricted to the Republic of Ireland and excluded Northern Ireland as a point of reference. This is largely the case because the discourse is heavily bound up with the comparison of the economic situation, and Northern Ireland simply did not experience such an astonishing transformation from a poor rural country to an economic powerhouse. In an interview with William Graham from the *Irish News*, Ian Paisley openly admits that Northern Ireland did not profit as much from the European Union as the South did. He said

It has been beneficial but alas because of the weakness of our government we did not get the full cut of money that we should have been getting. [...] I mean, the south of Ireland for a six-year period had six million a day from Europe. If you had given me six million a day I could have a Celtic tiger economy." (Graham "Paisley" 9)

Instead of serving as a role model for economic development, aspects of Northern Ireland's economy were occasionally compared to that of Eastern European countries. In one such instance, Seamus McKinney from the *Irish News* points to a report on the state of Derry's

economy by the American economist Rick Reinhard, which describes the city as “one of Europe’s worst economies” (“Man with” 14). He summarises the report claiming that, “[n]ot only has Derry one of the highest unemployment rates in Ireland, a new study published compared its economy to that of Eastern European cities emerging from the rule of communism”.

What Reinhard diagnoses for the city of Derry is extended by Patrick Murphy to the whole of Northern Ireland. In an article entitled “A political third world country in the West”, Murphy laments the political institutions of Northern Ireland that restrict the voter’s choice to either voting Catholic or Protestant. He describes the region as “three parallel universes: third world politics, second world economics and a first world society” (10). To define what he means by referring to Northern Ireland as a second world economy he employs a similar comparison as Reinhard had done. However, while the American economist had spoken of an economy emerging from communism, Murphy describes it as even more backwards. Northern Ireland’s economy, according to him, “reflects the old Eastern European communist system where most wealth was generated through government spending. It may even be argued that we do not really have an economy, just a Westminster public sector hand-out delivered in a brown envelope” (10). Those comparisons are far removed from the enthusiastic reports on the Celtic Tiger economy south of the border which position the Irish economy decades ahead of Eastern Europe and urge the new member states to learn from the Irish experience.

Yet, not everybody shares Murphy’s perspective on the bleak political situation in Northern Ireland. In an interview with William Graham, the Irish minister Noel Treacy claims that Northern Ireland’s experience holds a valuable political lesson for Eastern Europe. Referring to the peace process, he emphasises that the “great work here could be a role model for parts of Eastern Europe particularly the Balkans area ... so that similar work might be done there to heal the division and to bring economic opportunity and community leadership to communities” (Treacy cited in Graham “Clear end” 21). Similar views are voiced by Seamus McAleavey, the chief executive of the Northern Ireland Council of Voluntary action. He stresses that because of its historical experience Northern Ireland “has much to give [to] the enlarged Europe dedicated to peace and reconciliation” (cited in Gillespie “Europe can” 13). He considers “Ireland a microcosm of Europe”; however, unlike

Treacy, he does not have the recent wars in the Balkans in mind, but refers further back to the 17th century when religious wars were common all over Europe.

Ireland's relationship with Eastern Europe is multifaceted. On the one hand the two regions share many similar historical experiences, on the other hand, Ireland has moved economically and politically much closer to the rest of Western Europe than Eastern Europe. At the time of the EU enlargement many of the aspects that are still part of Eastern European life such as poverty, emigration and high unemployment were no longer part of the Irish experience, but had rather become part of the nation's collective memory. By contrast, many of the experiences of modernisation such as immigration and multiculturalism – experiences which most Western European countries had made decades ago - were relatively new to the Irish people. This explains the perception of Ireland as a link between the new member states and those at Europe's economic and cultural core. Gillespie captures this intermediary position of Ireland particularly well when he writes:

Thus EU enlargement on a continental scale has special implications for Ireland. If it is true that for the new member-states Europe is a memory, in contrast to western Europe, where it is a project, Ireland has a sense of both dimensions, arising from our recent experience and a comparison of it with the new member states. ("Europe can"
13)

Gillespie highlights the unique position of Ireland, as not only between East and West in terms of the aforementioned practical steps of development, but also not yet quite fitting neatly in the continuously evolving multicultural Europe. Instead, Ireland bridges the two spaces, sharing experiences with both halves of the continent that affirm its status as a role model.

6.3. The Effects of the Irish Experience of Emigration on the Perception of Immigrants

The discursive construction of immigration in Irish media with regard to Ireland's own experience of emigration has recently been analysed by a number of sociologists who came to rather different conclusions. Haynes, Breen and Devereux placed their focus on the media-framing of asylum-seekers in Ireland. They provide evidence that in most of the references this fraction of the immigrant population is consistently portrayed in negative terms. They proved, however, that apart from a few exceptions, this discourse was confined to the tabloid press and only a small number of these instances featured in the broadsheet

papers analysed: *The Irish Times* and *The Irish News*. Ultimately they concluded that “there appears to be a collective amnesia about the experience of Irish emigrants to England, the US and further afield, who often experience racism at various levels” (130).

Brian Conway took those findings as the starting point of his study on the discursive construction of national identity in the *Irish Times* between 1996 and 2004. He puts forward the hypothesis that immigration to Ireland would lead to a discourse that excluded “migrants from the imagined community of the [Irish] nation” (78). He based this assumption not only on the findings of Haynes, Breen and Devereux, but also on historical evidence presented by Ignatiev (1995), who affirmed an Irish tradition of racism by looking at the way Irish emigrants constructed themselves as White by defining themselves against the African-American community, which they considered racially inferior. Moreover, Conway also draws from a psychoanalytical argument by Ronit Lentin, who describes multiculturalism as “the return of the national repressed” (2002, 233). Lentin holds that the Irish experience of emigration caused a national trauma which remains unresolved. Thus, the repressed pain of emigration is conjured up by “the presence of the immigrant ‘other’ and in its wake invoking the unseemly presence of the ‘less than fully Irish’ indigenous and non-indigenous racialised ethnic groups, such as Travellers, the Asian, the Black, the Jew” (2002, 233).

For all these reasons, Conway expected to find a discursive construction that foregrounded the differences between the native Irish population and the immigrant communities and presented the newcomers as threatening the homogeneity of the Irish nation. Yet, the outcome of his research proved his assumptions wrong. Instead he found that the emigration experience was “explicitly claimed as a rationale for exhorting a positive political response to migration” (84). Conway groups his findings under two headings: The Historical Duty Argument and The Myth of Saint Patrick. Both categories present data emphasising that the past holds a lesson for the Irish nation. The experience of emigration is considered an asset for the Irish nation, which enables them to take a more inclusivist view of their contemporary society.

Conway’s categories of the Historical Duty Argument and The Myth of Saint Patrick are mirrored in the structure of this chapter. The first part analyses general references to a historical duty of the Irish to be empathetic with newcomers to their shores. Thereafter, the

special relevance of Saint Patrick as patron saint of immigrants is dealt with, and finally, in the last part of the chapter, specific references that link immigration to Ireland with contemporary Irish migrants living illegally in the United States are analysed in closer detail.

6.3.1. Welcoming Immigrants as a Historical Duty

The “historical duty argument” is a term coined by Steve Garner (159) and describes an anti-racist stance that derives from the Irish experience of poverty and emigration a moral obligation to be welcoming to those who seek refuge or simply better living conditions in Ireland. The argument equates contemporary immigrants with the economically and politically disadvantaged Irish of the past. According to Garner, it runs as follows: “Irish people have been (and still are) immigrants elsewhere. Therefore, today they should empathise, and treat others in that position with respect and welcome” (159). The historical duty argument is therefore based on the Irish people’s experience with emigration and does not extend into other aspects of history such as imperial domination. As the following examples show, the argument never draws on the Irish experience of oppression and imperialism. Consequently, there is little to no distinction made between legal immigrants, such as those coming from the new EU member states, asylum seekers and illegal immigrants. Even though it is often acknowledged that those groups face very different challenges, the basic argument extends to all of them.

As Conway points out, those who employ references to the Irish people’s collective memory in order to urge for sympathetic treatment of immigrants frequently come from civil society organisations. Residents Against Racism (RAR), a small group of activists from Dublin, fits neatly into this category. They are a small autonomous group of citizens that offer support to immigrants faced with racist abuse or threatened by deportation. In an article by Valerie Robinson, the *Irish News* Southern Correspondent, one of the group’s members states:

What amazes me is that almost everyone in Ireland has experience of emigration. We all have family living abroad. We should be more than willing to welcome people who are looking for better lives rather than threatening to deport them. (cited in Robinson “Irish” 14)

The usefulness of the argument to infer a historical duty and thereby a moral obligation is also apparent in the structure of the article. While the cited remark was placed at the end of

the article, Robinson chose to reproduce the essence of it also in the article's heading and thereby placed an affirmative emphasis on this argumentation. The heading reads: "Irish challenged to rethink image as a welcoming people; Despite Ireland's history of emigration, new arrivals to these shores do not necessarily receive the famed Irish welcome".

The lack of an Irish welcome is also the topic of a letter to the editor of the *Irish Times* by Steward Kenny from Dublin. He criticises the perception of immigrant workers as an economic commodity that adds value to the Irish economy. On that note he laments the individualism and materialism that came hand in hand with prosperity and the loss of a "tradition of looking out for and helping one another" ("Immigration" 15). His main criticism is best expressed in this paragraph:

Ireland "welcomed" more than 100,000 newcomers last year alone. But is the welcome we offer not in fact a pretty dubious one? Do we celebrate diversity, do we welcome strangers? I think we just about tolerate inward migration where it is necessary to maintain our economic momentum. Integration? Forget it. We treat immigrant employees as virtual "bonded labour" through employer ownership of work permits. ("Immigration" 15)

The references to the "Irish welcome" in those examples touch on the issue of Irish identity by questioning Irish self-perception as a people famous for their hospitality. One needs only to think of Joyce's "The Dead", in which the protagonist Gabriel praises "the tradition of genuine warm-hearted courteous Irish hospitality" and already warned that the new generation "will lack those qualities of humanity, of hospitality, of kindly humour" (232), to understand its cultural relevance. Robinson now urges the Irish to rethink this image of themselves as a hospitable nation and thereby implies that those who oppose immigration as a threat to Irish identity are in fact not living up to principles of Irishness they claim to defend.

As the need for a re-interpretation of Irish national identity to fit an increasingly multicultural society is frequently expressed, it is necessary first to outline the parameters of that identity prior to the recent changes in Ireland's ethnic structure. Conway (80) points to the distinction between civic and ethnic national identity. While the former is based on the understanding that the members of a nation share certain political and legal codes, the latter is conceptualised in terms of shared language, history and memory. Historically, Irish national identity was based on an ethnic conception of Irishness. Lee (1989, cited in Conway

80-81) points to Éamon de Valera's "Dream Speech" of St. Patrick's Day 1943 to identify land, religion and the Gaelic language as the main pillars of Irishness.

Those three categories continue to hold an important place in the Irish understanding of nationality, even though certain reconfigurations have taken place. For one, the number of Gaelic speakers has consistently declined since de Valera's speech; yet, it nevertheless represents a relevant factor in the discourse on immigration. Considering the increasing number of non-native minorities, O'Luachrain asks "what future is there for the already half-starved Gaelic resurgence?" ("Some have" 9). Terry Moylan attempts to answer that question and by doing so discloses the continuing relevance of the Gaelic language for Irish national identity. In a letter to the editor of the *Irish Times*, he proposes to "automatically and immediately, confer Irish citizenship on any immigrant who becomes proficient in the Irish language" ("The language" 15).

Also the category of land as a traditional pillar of Irishness has been redefined. Conway (81) refers to President Robinson's inclusion of "the global Irish diaspora as part of the national 'we'" in the early 1990s as evidence of a "reconfiguration of the spatial boundaries of Irishness". Despite some modifications, Irish national identity remains overwhelmingly an ethnic construction as evidenced by the overwhelming support for the Citizenship Referendum of 2004, which ultimately gave the grandchildren of an Irish citizen, who never set foot on Irish soil, a stronger legal claim to Irish citizenship than the children of non-Irish nationals born in Ireland.

A wish to move closer towards a civic definition of Irishness as the basis of a multicultural society is a connecting feature of most statements that evoke Ireland's historical duty. One such instance of a call for multiculturalism by the Irish President was reported by Patsy McGarry. She writes:

President Mary McAleese has said she would not be happy with "a great debate about multiculturalism versus integration" in Ireland. She felt it would be "dreadful" if Ireland, "with such a historical experience of cultural imperialism", tried "to impose those shapes on others" here. ("President urges" 2)

In this paragraph, the Irish President herself contributes to the debate and expresses a clear preference for multiculturalism. The shapes she does not want to impose on others are thus the bearers of an ethnic national identity. McAleese would consequently consider any such

attempt as cultural imperialism and therefore proposes a different approach by evoking the experience of the Irish. Hence, immigrants in Ireland,

should abide by the State's laws as Irish emigrants did in host countries abroad, but that the culture of immigrants to Ireland should be allowed to flourish as Irish culture had in host countries. The most important thing was "to make people feel welcome and allow them to penetrate our culture as they wish", she said. "We don't want to build barriers. That is the opposite of what we want to do." ("President urges" 2)

Just like McAleese, Peter Sutherland, the UN's special representative for migration, also pointed to "multiculturalism [as] part of the future" and emphasised the need for the Irish to "learn that our identity has to be adapted to recognise that we are becoming, and will be, a society with others in it" (cited in O'Brien "Sutherland" 3). To justify this adaptation of Irishness he also evokes the Irish history of emigration, saying: "We know what it means to be left on the outside".

While McAleese and Sutherland saw the need for an adaptation of Irish identity to facilitate the inclusion of foreign elements, Carol Hunt, a former immigrant to the US, disagrees. She explains the reasons for Ireland's economic miracle by citing the sociologist Saskia Sassen. Sassen believes in the inclusive nature of Irish identity, thus denies that any adaptation would be necessary to help the development of a multicultural society.

[Sassen] believes the Irish are leading the way in the new non-State, global era, and have become the template for other countries to follow. Because Ireland has a very complex identity, we are much more flexible than other Western nations, and able to absorb difference and change with greater ease" ("Sure, Aren't").

The reason, according to Sassen, why Irish identity is so suitable for the inclusion of differences is once again found in the Irish history of emigration which enables the Irish "to view [them]selves in international terms, rather than as a people defined by a small geographical boundary" ("Sure, Aren't"). A similar notion is expressed in an *Irish Times* article ("Forgotten Emigrants" 15), its author considers the reinterpretation of emigration as providing "international links for [...] one of the most globalised economies in the world", instead of symptoms of underdevelopment and poverty. Hunt consequently finds in this positively connoted perception of emigration the reason why the Irish find themselves "sympathising with the problems of immigrants to Ireland, both legal and illegal, as they try to gain access to the famed Celtic economy, and duplicate the Irish success story for

themselves" ("Sure Aren't"). The essence of this statement follows the same logic as the historical duty argument, linking Ireland's past with the situation of current immigrants. Hunt is, however, much more optimistic, as she does not seem to believe that the Irish need a reminder of their historical duty, but instead takes their sympathy for granted.

For those who do need a reminder of Irish history two references to the Proclamation of the Irish Republic of 1916 are employed to highlight the inclusive nature of Irishness outlined in this document. The first was, as so often in this context, President McAleese, who states that

[w]e have still in front of us the ambitions set out in the Proclamation of 1916 to create a country where all the nation's children are treated equally. Yet we were considerably nearer than Hyde was or ever dreamed to be. (cited in O'Brien "President urges" 2)

In the spirit of this declaration McAleese paints a picture of contemporary Ireland as a nation that embraces "the Anglo along with the Gael [...] the global Irish family abroad and the new Irish – all emigrants from abroad" ("President urges" 2). Hardly surprising not everybody shared the view that Ireland was close to fulfilling the promises of the 1916 Proclamation. In a letter to the editor of the *Irish News*, Sean O'Luachrain, a Republican from Belfast, took the opposite stance and called the "ignorant, bigoted and in some cases plain racist attitudes highlighted even more so by the Republic government's 'citizenship' referendum" a "far cry from the visions of the 1916 brotherhood" ("Some have" 9). Even though he disagreed with McAleese on the present state of Ireland, he in a similar way evokes Ireland's moral obligation to welcome immigrants to its shore and to promote multiculturalism. He states:

Not many years have passed since thousands of our own people crossed the water to England when work here could not be found. For all its faults, English money helped raise many an Irish family. ("Some have" 9)

O'Luachrain is one of few commentators that actually link their arguments explicitly to the negative attitudes towards citizens of the new European Union member states; he speaks of "people of Poland, Romania [and] the Czech Republic" as being confronted with open hostility by some "within the larger nationalist community" This reduction of the immigrant community to legal immigrants from the EU is to be understood in connection with a modification of the historical duty argument O'Luachrain invokes at a later stage of the

article. He points to the benefits EU membership had for Ireland and thus infers a duty to act truly European and welcome the new arrivals.

We have taken the money, the support and the tax relief offered to us with grabbing, greedy hands. . . yet now some have the audacity to wish to expel our fellow Europeans from our shores. ("Some have" 9)

While O'Luachrain places the main emphasis of his argument on solidarity with immigrants within the European Union, Damien Flinter, in a letter to the editor of the *Irish Times*, expands the argument to the macro-level of immigration to the European Union from Northern Africa. To establish a link with the collective memory of the Irish people, he draws a comparison between those thousands of migrants who risk their lives in tiny boats every year, trying to find a better future in Europe, with the Irish people that fled the Famine. After first criticising the Irish government's treatment of non-EU immigrants he closes with the words: "Meantime the coffin-ships keep breaking up against the southern flanks of the fortress" ("The benefits" 15), thus evoking the memory of the ships that took Irish emigrants escaping the Famine overseas.

The data collected between 2004 and 2006 suggest that the historical duty argument has been connected to issues of Irish national identity at a time when large-scale immigration was increasingly viewed as a threat to the pillars of Irishness. Many of those applying this argument not only insist on the famous Irish welcome, but also exhort the creation of a multicultural society that does not impose restrictions on the cultural expression of its newest members. This is also seen as a historical duty derived from the pride in the global Irish culture that has been established through the diaspora.

6.3.2. The Patron Saint of Immigrants

Apart from the historical duty argument, the second prominent rhetorical device identified by Conway is what he calls the myth of St. Patrick (86). The device explicitly links the debate on immigration with the collective memory of Ireland's patron saint. It is based on the myth created around Ireland's national hero who allegedly came to Ireland as a slave, abducted from his native Wales. He later fled, became a follower of the Church and returned to convert the Irish to Christianity. Those who employ this rhetorical device infer from Patrick's

suffering as a slave and his position as an immigrant an obligation to treat contemporary immigrants with generosity and compassion.

Conway (84) points out that references to the myth of St. Patrick in relation to immigration are entirely confined to the month of March. The data selected for this thesis proved no exception. Only three articles fitting into this category emerged from the selected data, which is, however, no surprise considering that the period under scrutiny includes the month of March only twice.

Three days after Saint Patrick's Day 2005, Michael O'Loughlin publically pondered in an article of the *Sunday Independent* ("St. Patrick") the importance of Ireland's National Holiday. He asked whether there remains any significance of this day for a "post-Catholic, post-nationalist, multicultural Ireland" only to answer this question in the affirmative.

St Patrick came to Ireland as an illegal immigrant. Kidnapped or sold into slavery, he tended our sheep. Was he any different to the Chinese now working in our restaurants or the Eastern-European girls working out of luxury apartments in Dublin 4? He escaped from this economic slavery, but later he would return, more or less in the employ of a rapidly growing empire. What could be more fitting for the new Ireland than a patron saint who was not even born here? ("St. Patrick")

On another occasion, in the editorial of the *Irish Times* on St. Patrick's Day 2005, questions about whether or not there still was any meaning to this day in modern society have been asked. Again the answer was that St. Patrick's continuing appeal is not to be found in his religious role, but in the "explosion of creative energy among the public events and parades" ("St. Patrick"). Evidentially, St. Patrick has become detached from his religious meaning; Conway (87) even describes him as "an empty shell onto which different people, depending on their socio-political viewpoints, can impute or hang a range of, sometimes contradictory, readings, meanings and interpretations". Thus, the author of the *Irish Times'* inscribes a moral lesson into St. Patrick's life.

Ireland's national saint was an immigrant to these shores, coming here first as a slave from Britain and returning later as a missionary who successfully converted the Irish to Christianity. A notable theme in the reconfiguration of his legacy has been Ireland's diasporic identity as a migratory nation. This makes it all the more reprehensible that 35 Nigerian nationals should have been deported, apparently summarily, on the eve of the national holiday. Such an unworthy betrayal of St Patrick's legacy should prompt a fight back against this callous policy.

The author of the third article, Michael Leonard, expresses the belief that St. Patrick's message speaks to immigrants to Ireland and Irish emigrants alike. Leonard calls for support of the "undocumented" Irish in the United States who are "a large number of disempowered young people" ("Focusing" 16) that continue to need assistance from their former homeland. St. Patrick's experience of forced migration, he believes, is what links him to illegal immigrants all over the world.

The truth is [that many immigrants] are as vulnerable to exploitation as Patrick was. They are not slaves in the strict sense of the word; yet unscrupulous bosses often crush their dignity. Because many of them are "illegal" they are forced to work longer hours for less wages and with none of the benefits which are available to other workers. ("Focusing" 16)

By appealing to the experience of St. Patrick, and to that of Irish emigrants living illegally in the US, Leonard equally implies a religious and a historical duty of the Irish people "to overcome the attitudes of prejudice" and "to exclude no one from [their] care". That however not everybody perceives the similarities between Irish immigrants in the US and those migrating to Ireland as evident is a topic that deserves closer attention.

6.3.3. The Special Case of "Undocumented" Irish Immigrants in the United States

Unlike the historical duty argument and the evocation of St. Patrick, the comparison between illegal immigrants in the US and those in Ireland only marginally touches on the issue of immigration from Eastern Europe. The debate analysed in this chapter nevertheless holds implications for the general discourse on migration in Ireland. While on the one hand immigrants from the new member states of the European Union are often seen positively, as they contribute actively to the growth of a booming economy which is short of skilled workers, illegal immigrants are treated quite differently by the Irish establishment. Politicians that welcomed unlimited access to the labour market for new EU members were eager to enforce strict regulations on all the others that wanted to profit from the Irish economy. The fact that the Irish government is actively lobbying for the naturalisation of illegal immigrants in the US – whom they euphemistically call "undocumented" instead of illegal – is often criticised in the media and should be considered as a component of the historical duty argument. Gene Kerrigan from the *Sunday Independent* approaches this topic by asking a number of rhetorical questions:

IF YOU knew the whereabouts of a bunch of illegal immigrants, would you inform on them? I don't mean people on the run from torturers, I mean illegal immigrants. Economic refugees, if you want to use that term. People who left home in search of a better life.

Would you rat them out? After all, they're behaving illegally, deceitfully, some would say they're "spongers and wasters". Would you inform the authorities, knowing they'd be kicked out of the country? Rest assured, they'd still have the protection of an appeal process, and they'd be kicked out in compliance with thoughtfully constructed laws.

These immigrants of whom we speak are, as it happens, Irish. ("Time for")

Kerrigan's description of illegal immigrants as "spongers and wasters" who lied and deceived the authorities contains elements that are frequently projected onto the immigrant other, while nobody would apply them in connection with the Irish. He uses this rhetorical device to emphasize the similarities between those illegal Irish living in the US and illegal immigrants in Ireland. What Kerrigan objects to are calls by Fine Gael for special exemptions for the 50,000 Irish citizens that fall into this category, while at the same time no such exemption is under consideration in Ireland. On that note, Patsy McGarry reminds her readers that the Citizenship referendum actually made the situation for illegals in Ireland even more difficult. She states that it would be "utter hypocrisy" if parents of illegal immigrants in the US had voted for it ("A prophet" 15).

In an article called "Time to end double-standard on immigration", Karlin Lillington explains that immigration centre workers in the US, as well as Irish ministers would often appeal to the American authorities by discussing the "sad, sad situation of the Irish illegals in the US who can never come home for Christmas" (8), while at the same time "Romanians and Serbs" in Ireland face the same difficulties. They are similarly working under exploitive conditions with no possibility to turn to the state for the protection of labour rights without the risk of deportation.

A number of reactions that defended the comparison between "undocumented Irish" and "illegal immigrants in Ireland" were sparked by an interview with Foreign Minister Dermot Ahern who denied any similarities between the two cases: "They are not the same" (cited in O'Neill "Plight of" 1). Ahern even hesitated on the point whether or not "undocumented" Irish in the US were illegal. Referring to the on-going debate on legalisation in the US Senate he declared:

If the legislature here are discussing the possibility of changes in order to legalise and regularise their position, well, you know, they're entitled to be here from that point of view. But in the strict sense, I suppose, they're illegal. (cited in "Plight of" 1)

The reactions to these faltering comments in letters to the editor ranged from:

Dermot Ahern must be living in cloud-cuckoo land if he only "supposes" that illegal Irish immigrants in the US are indeed illegal. What is it about the word "illegal" that Mr. Ahern doesn't understand? (Katherine Davies "Ahern comments on Irish in US" 17)

to rather more considerate reactions that pointed to the problems of the illegal Irish as much less grave than those of many illegals in Ireland. Jim Casey, for instance, writes:

"They're not the same" he [Ahern] said. That is the only part of his appalling statement that I agree with. If the Irish "illegals" are sent home they are unlikely to be killed, are likely to have a reasonable chance of a good job and in general will have a much better chance to achieve whatever goals they have set for themselves. Sadly, even the most optimistic would not expect the same for the Afghans were they to be deported. (Ahern comments on Irish "illegals" 15)

Most references found in the data analysed mention 9/11 as a turning point for illegal immigrants in the US, because in the wake of international anti-terrorism airport security was drastically enforced in the US, which meant that those Irish citizens concerned could under no circumstances leave the country without being denied re-entry. Yet, the debate is older than that as evident in an *Irish Times* article ("Refugees are") cited by Guerin (99). Guerin shows that already in 1998 Minister O'Donoghue used the same strategy of dismissing any accusation of hypocrisy as unfair as Ahern would do years later.

The historic duty argument, as Garner (160-61) explains, is often challenged by the contradictory view that Irish emigrants, contributed to their host societies' economy and culture, while immigrants to Ireland simply consume taxpayers' money. This argument, the antithesis to historical duty, emphasises Irish exceptionality and highlights that the Irish who went abroad could not expect any of the social benefits which immigrants to Ireland subtract. Garner points out that in this discourse "immigrants are spongers [and] economics take precedence over the moralistic reading of the immigrant experience" (161). While Garner cited sources that support his claim, no references, apart from those uttered by Irish politicians, explicitly denied similarities between the Irish experience of emigration and the situation of contemporary immigrants in Ireland.

7. Eastern Europeans Immigrants as an Economic Necessity

While arguments considering the historical similarities between Eastern Europe and Ireland played an important role in the discourse on migration, by far the biggest number of references to Eastern European immigrants was made in respect to economic consideration. Whether or not immigrants should be welcomed mostly depended on a simple cost-benefit evaluation, for which the main criterion was their potential contribution to continued economic growth. This line of argumentation, however, also sparked a considerable backlash by those who denied the pre-eminence of aspects of the economy and argued instead for a society that does not view immigrants as simply an economic commodity but rather as human beings deserving the same treatment and support as the native Irish population. This chapter is divided into three parts. Firstly, it analyses the discourse that constructs Eastern European workers as an economic commodity needed to sustain Ireland's economic growth. It looks at the representation of these workers' skills and at the perception of, mainly Polish, fears of a brain drain. Secondly, an opposition discourse is examined that questions the priority placed on economic growth and constructs immigration rather as a threat to the Irish community. Ultimately, a short chapter outlines the arguments of those who criticise exploitation of foreign workers as inherent in the employment system and call on the government to adapt procedures that do away with structural disadvantages for Eastern European immigrants.

7.1 Eastern Europeans as an Economic Asset

Numerous articles deal with the importance of continuing immigration from Eastern Europe to sustain the high levels of economic growth experienced in Ireland by the middle of the decade. All three newspapers follow the same line of endorsing large-scale immigration and highlighting its benefits. Brendan Keenan from the *Sunday Independent* expresses this notion under the heading "We should count the great flowing tide of immigration as a blessing". He points out that

[n]ations of immigrants tend to be vibrant places, culturally and economically. Immigrants add to the labour force, and therefore to a country's potential economic growth. Traditionally, they may lack the skill of the native population, but they are often more ambitious and willing to work much harder. But arrivals from the new EU are not immigrants in this traditional sense. They are entitled to come here and work if and

when they wish, and to leave if and when they wish. They can match their skills and qualifications to the jobs available. ("We should")

Keenan describes the influx of immigrants as a "bargain" which the Irish should not reject because it promises strong economic growth. He reckons that "on past trends, the economy would have the potential to grow at 5 per cent a year for the next 15 years". Although Keenan also stresses the cultural benefits that come with a more diverse society, he places the main emphasis on economic reasoning. Immigrant workers from the accession states are represented as an economic variable that is considered valuable because their presence leads to higher productivity and faster growth. The former Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald applies the same discourse in an article discussing "[t]he ever-increasing need for foreign labour". Just like Keenan, FitzGerald also aims to dispel the public's fears of high immigration rates. He attempts this, on the one hand, by reminding his audience that even before the EU enlargement, at the height of the boom, the influx of foreign workers was comparatively high, on the other hand, by stressing the undeniable economic benefits due to the immigrant communities' demographic distribution.

We know that in 2002 no less than three-quarters of these foreign immigrants joined our labour force, so only one-quarter of them were dependents – a far lower dependency ratio than in the case of the Irish population. [...] This low proportion of foreign workers' dependents in Ireland [...] reflects the fact that most of the dependents of these later workers remain in and are housed, and, in case of their children, educated in those countries, *at no cost to us*. [my emphasis] ("The ever-increasing" 16).

Fitting with his economist viewpoint, FitzGerald translates human beings, namely the children of immigrants, into figures of an economic calculation and is evidently pleased with the favourable outcome. His argument conveys the notion that Ireland is primarily interested in the migrants' manpower and not in the integration of those communities and their families into Irish society. Although FitzGerald advocates immigration, even predicting that the number of foreign workers "will double [...] to about 700,000 ", he does not seem to be preoccupied with the social consequences of migration.

Given the fact that FitzGerald implies support for labour arrangements that separate migrant workers from their families, it is likely that he assumes the immigrant community would eventually return to their countries of origin. Dan McLaughlin, the chief economist of the Bank of Ireland, describes the possibility that foreign workers could simply return home

if they are no longer needed as the “one advantage of having a huge number of immigrants” (Suiter “Influx”). He refers to the Irish tradition of exporting unemployed people, stating: “Our safety valve was always emigration and while we had mass unemployment, it did not reach revolutionary levels because people left” (cited in Suiter “Influx”). All this suggests that Eastern European migrants are considered a commodity that can be used at will as long as it is beneficial for the Irish economy and easily disposed of in the case of an economic downturn.

A prime example of this discourse appeared in the *Irish News* under the heading “Petrol bomb targets ‘vital’ work force” (Canning 11). The article describes two separate petrol bomb attacks on buildings in Armagh inhabited by Latvian, Polish and Portuguese immigrants. The author describes the motives as unclear but suspects sectarian or racist motivations. Conspicuously the article criticises the attacks on the basis that they were directed against migrant workers “who are contributing to the economy and indeed, some would say, keeping the factories open”. This gives the impression that racist attacks against immigrants are worse if they are directed against a “vital work force”. This form of discourse depersonalises migrant workers and ascribes only one value to them, namely an economic one.

Similarly the Irish Small to Medium Enterprise association (ISME) also links the need to treat Eastern European migrant workers well to their economic importance. Robert Berney, the chairman of the association, fears increasing competition from the UK and Germany for such labour influx (Downes “Economy” 17). Therefore he considers it necessary that those workers be “treated with the dignity and respect they deserve, and afforded the same rights and opportunities available to Irish employees”. He explains this call for a better immigration policy with the fact that certain sectors of the economy, such as “construction, catering and food procession sectors, together with the hospitality sector, are almost completely reliant on immigrant labour”. Immigrants are thus portrayed as an economic asset worth competing for. Failing to attract skilled foreign labour would consequently be an economic disadvantage and threaten Ireland’s competitiveness.

All those remarks suggest that the beneficial effect of immigration from the new member states of the EU is widely recognised within the readership of the three newspapers selected. The need for further immigration is thus portrayed as common sense, even though

occasional statements like Keenan's, "There are those who will wish the eastern Europeans would stay at home, and who would settle for less economic growth" ("We should"), suggest that there is also a sizable group that dismisses this argument. Those views might well be dominant in other parts of the Irish society; however in the discourse as reproduced in editorials and opinion pieces of the *Sunday Independent*, the *Irish Times* and the *Irish News* they play a minor role.

7.1.1 Eastern Europeans as Bringing Valuable Skills

Keenan's remark that Eastern European immigrants differ from traditional immigrants, who are generally less qualified than the native population, reverberates in numerous other articles. Ruadhán Mac Cormaic points to a study by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), which concluded that Ireland's "most recent immigrants are more highly educated than their Irish counterparts, with over 40 per cent of those who arrived in 2004-05 having a third-level qualification" ("Immigrants" 19). The study also highlights an "occupational gap", which means that immigrant workers tend to work in sectors of the economy that do not match their qualifications. FitzGerald points to the same phenomenon and locates its root in the lack of English language skills.

In general, immigrants are well-educated; but because about three-quarters of them come from countries in which English is not the main language, some are forced to undertake, at least in the early stages, work that does not engage their skills. It would be very much to our advantage to ensure the provision to such immigrants of English language classes that would enable them to engage in work more appropriate to their educational level and professional capacity. ("Media" 18)

This remark again touches on the point that immigrant workers are foremost an asset, but highlights that there is even more potential to them than currently realised. In an earlier article, published around the enlargement of the European Union, FitzGerald places emphasis on the contribution of immigrants to the booming economy since the beginning of the decade. He stresses that "[i]t is to these highly-skilled and well-educated immigrants that [the Irish] owe much of [their] Celtic Tiger growth" ("Immigrants were" 14). Thus, immigration from the new member states of the EU was not only welcomed on the basis that it provided cheap labour that kept certain low-skilled sectors going, but also because it improved the quality of the overall labour pool available on the Irish employment market.

Northern Ireland was no exception from this rule. Bimpe Fatogun draws attention to the high number of Eastern European doctors that are essential to keep the services of the National Health Service (NHS) in Northern Ireland intact. Fatogun explains that one doctor from “the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, and Slovakia” is needed every week to “fill vacant positions [and] keep the NHS afloat” (“Doctors” 16).

Apart from third-level-educated, highly skilled immigrants, Eastern European craftsmen also got favourable reviews in Irish print media. They were frequently described as an asset for the economy and received particular praise for their reliability and working habits. This is not only due to their importance for Ireland’s booming construction sector; many journalists describe Eastern European workers as vastly superior to their Irish colleagues.

In an article in the *Sunday Independent* (“Can Builders”), the author laments the difficulties of getting an Irish builder who would finish the contracted work on schedule. By contrast, Eastern Europeans are described as “honest, hardworking, decent people who have a habit of getting the job done in time”. Sean Hegarty from the *Irish Times* finds similar words, heaping praise onto Eastern European craftsmen. He states:

Thanks to the construction boom, each of [the Irish craftsmen] is booked solid until the end of the century, so they don’t need us. It is why we have become increasingly reliant on eastern European tradesmen. They arrive when they say they will. They give a good price. They do the work in half the time, and clean up after themselves. (“The plumber” 6)

He goes on to point especially to the Poles:

Poland, in particular, seems to be a nation of tradesmen able to put their hands to anything. They’ll paint your hall, stairs and landing, fix a shower while they’re at it and throw up a kitchen extension during lunch hour. The only thing is, there are so many here that you wonder if, across Eastern Europe, odd jobs go undone, toilets unplumbed, wallpaper unstripped. (“The plumber” 6)

Both these examples suggest that the working morals of Eastern European immigrants are widely considered to be outstanding. Their contribution to the Irish economy is beyond doubt. As the analysis of Kevin Myers’ “An Irishman’s Diary” (February 2, 2006) reveals, those positive characteristics of Eastern European workers are so obvious that they can even be turned against them. Myers starts his article by quoting the Polish ambassador to Ireland,

Witold Sobkow, who claimed that Polish workers would be up to 20 percent more efficient than Irish ones. Taking up this claim, Myers states:

The Poles that I've met are at least 50 percent better than their Irish counterparts. Maybe Witold had the misfortune of meeting only employers of that exceedingly rare phenomenon, the stupid, lazy Pole (who is still superior to a great many Irish). No society in the world has been made poorer by having Polish immigrants, and we are richer by far because of their presence here. *But it is the very quality of the Poles that disturbs me*, with a vast reservoir of millions of others of perhaps comparable merit back home. [my emphasis]

Myers argues that the open labour market is a threat to the Irish economy precisely because Poles are so talented and hardworking and, as there is no possibility to restrict them in number, they will inevitably start displacing Irish workers by the time the labour market can no longer absorb all of them. Myers thus attacks a political system, which, according to him, caters entirely for the economy and forgets the society which is threatened by a “demographic revolution” that might sweep away the predominantly Irish character of the country. This reasoning, however, is part of a different argument focusing on the conflicting interests of economy and society, which will be dealt with in closer detail in Chapter 7.2. Before that, however, another aspect of the discourse that constructs Eastern Europeans as an economic asset ought to be mentioned.

7.1.2. Eastern European Attempts to Reverse the Brain Drain

This short section is dedicated to a sub-category of the discourse on Eastern Europeans as a variable in an economic calculation promising growth as a result of immigration by skilled workers. It deals with a shortage of skilled labour in the migrant workers' countries of origin. While, for instance, by mid-2004 Polish representatives like the MEP and former Polish foreign minister Bronislaw Geremek (Bréadún “MEP” 10) talked of a win-win situation for Poland and Ireland, the economic situation in Poland changed during the course of the following two years, and the term “brain drain” began to appear frequently. All such instances were found in the data from 2006 and almost exclusively referred to Poland, the only exception being one article on Latvia. Irish newspapers did not only report on Polish and Latvian attempts to lure their citizens back but by doing so also affirmed the economic value of those workers and their desirability for the Irish economy.

Jamie Smyth reports on the difficulties expanding companies have in recruiting skilled staff in places like Warsaw and Wroclaw. He points to the serious challenge migration to the west is for the Polish construction sector, even posing a threat to “Warsaw’s ability to spend the EUR 67 billion of EU cohesion funds due to flow to Poland during the next budget period, from 2007 to 2013” (“Poland has” 10). Even though Poland’s president Lech Kaczynski called on the migrants to return, Smyth predicts that this is unlikely to happen. Political instability in Poland and lower salaries are cited as reasons. Ultimately, the article closes with a perfect example of the reduction of human beings to an economic commodity. Smyth draws attention to Romanians and Bulgarians who could solve Poland’s problem and concludes: “[s]o in Europe the *migration of skills* from the east looks set to continue” [my emphasis]. Migrant workers are depersonalised and reduced to their skills; their individuality is subordinated while their economic value is emphasised.

An article by Dan McLaughlin deals with the same problem, similarly describing the Polish workers in Ireland as the fuel driving the economy. He points out that Ireland, the UK and Sweden “gained from the injection of young, skilled and highly-motivated labour into ageing workforces. But while their growing economies suck in cheap and productive migrant workers from eastern Europe, countries like Poland are increasingly alarmed at the ‘brain drain’” (“Dynamic” 15). In this metaphorical description of migration processes, the economy again takes the subject position which guides the discourse. Additionally, migrant workers are depicted as an object that can be injected or sucked in. Moreover, the article outlines the attributes that those immigrants ought to possess, which render them precious for the economy. They need to be young, skilled, highly-motivated, cheap and productive.

All the aforementioned data have one common trait. They stress the conviction that immigration from the new member states is beneficial for Ireland, as it leads to higher growth rates. On the other hand, John Lalor (“Open the”) is less convinced that Ireland, the UK and Sweden outperformed the rest of the old EU members due to their open door policy on migration. He points to a different economic model prevalent in these countries which he perceives as the main reason for their current success.

Ireland and, albeit to a lesser extent, Britain and Sweden, have maintained an Anglo-Saxon economic model. We are not an attractive destination because we offer luscious perks – like long holidays and short working weeks – but because we offer jobs. Because

of this, Ireland is proportionately the top destination of central European migrants. A total of 3.8 per cent of our working-age population comes from the EU-10 – six times more than Britain.

The Germans and French sneer at our working practices, believing them to be vulgar and cut-throat, but their unemployment levels and growth put that argument to rest.

Lalor thus argues for an economic model that gives precedence to a low unemployment rate and growth even at the risk of being exploitative. He favours a system that brings great numbers of migrant workers in, yet denies them access to welfare benefits for the first two years. Certainly not everybody who portrays skilled Eastern European workers as an economic commodity is equally arguing for neo-liberal policies; however, many of these authors carefully point in that direction.

7.2. Criticism of Capitalism

While the pre-eminence of the economy is emphasised again and again in Irish broadsheet newspapers, an oppositional discourse that criticises the preoccupation with cheap labour and economic growth is also present in those papers. Unlike references to the economic value of immigrant workers, which are mostly found in opinion articles and editorials, the counter-argument is almost entirely located in letters to the editor and in Kevin Myers' column *An Irishman's Diary*, which appears in the *Irish Times*. Myers, as mentioned above, recognises the economic value of immigrants but, contrary to many of his journalistic colleagues, believes that the "underlying issue is not the economy, but the society" (2. February 2006). He frequently portrays himself as the only independent voice in the Irish media and criticises the open employment market promoted by the establishment, as well as multiculturalism. Reproducing "new racist" (see Garner 169) rhetoric which depicts immigrants as a threat to the essence of Irish culture and to the nation's resources such as jobs and welfare, Myers spearheads those who argue for greater regulation of the labour market and criticise the obsession with economic growth. In his column from 5 August 2005 he poses the questions "What are we? A community or an economy?" and expresses his fears for the future of Ireland in the following way:

We are steadily transforming Irish life from being primarily a large community, called a nation, with an economy attached to pay for it, to being primarily an economy with no clear sense of community. But humans need to belong to a community, with an inner cohesion as its core, with a daily expectation of small and voluntary kindnesses. And if

we continue to believe that we are primarily an economy, and not a nation served by a subordinate economy, then terrible dangers lie ahead. ("An Irishman's Diary, 5 August 2005)

The danger ahead Myers refers to is what he sees as the negative consequences of unrestricted immigration. He points to economists who claim that the achievement of Ireland's growth potential is dependent on an influx of 300,000 migrant workers over the course of the next ten years and goes on to ask: "Should we not, in the long term, be more modest in our expectations of 'growth potential', and more ambitious in the creation of social harmony?"; thereby, portraying social disharmony as the inevitable consequence of continuing migration. Myers refers to Britain, whose multicultural society he seems to disdain, to paint a gloomy picture of an Irish future full of people of ethnic minority background and welfare-spongers. And even though his populist approach to immigration is evident, he still laments that nobody but him is prepared "to discuss this question maturely". Ultimately, Myers' recommendation to prevent "Limerick [from turning] into Leicester" and to preserve Ireland as "a cohesive, pluralist society, capable of peacefully absorbing immigrants [is to] limit immigration, and thus economic growth".

Myers's views seem to strike a chord with certain sections of the Irish population; even though they represent a minority position in the business-oriented broadsheet media. The content of various letters to the editor of the *Irish Times* mirror his arguments. Like Myers, the authors of these letters also employ a discourse that constructs a divergence between the economic interests of the establishment and those of the Irish people. They all agree that unrestricted access to the Irish labour market for Eastern European workers benefits only a small fraction of the Irish population but places a burden on all the others. David Barnwell summarises these views in his letter, emphasising that this is the talk of ordinary people in the streets, pubs and workplaces of Ireland.

The fact that mass immigration suits the interests of the wealthy, be they the employers of underpaid construction or abattoir workers, or Dublin 4 beau monde who enjoy using a Filipina nanny. There is no evidence that mass immigration is of any benefit to ordinary Irish workers. In fact there is evidence that mass immigration is harmful, since it drives down wages, increases housing costs, and adds stress to overworked medical and educational systems. ("Debate on" 21)

Barnwell picks up Myers' critique of the supremacy of economic considerations and also reproduces his fear that large-scale immigration could endanger Irish culture and turn the

native population into an ethnic minority. The “greatest demographic change since the plantations in the 17th century”, he complains, enjoys the support of “political parties, newspapers, trade unions, employers, churches and (most) journalists”. This is again an attack on the established elites that consider economic growth to be the preeminent achievement of a society.

Liam O’Geibheannaigh argues along the same lines stating that “economic success bought at the cost of losing our identity as an ‘Irish’ nation is a bad bargain” (“Immigration” 13). He also accuses the government of gambling with Ireland’s future by “providing an endless supply of low-cost labour to meet the demands of local and global business concerns”. These remarks imply criticism of the kind of Anglo-Saxon economic model John Lalor (“Open the”) so proudly endorsed. In another letter, Simon O’Donnell (“Economic”) spells out what others only hint at, a general discontent with a capitalist system which subordinates all other aspects of society to the economy. He warns of “hitch[ing] our economy wagon to the US system of monopoly capitalism” and predicts that the influx of immigrant workers will lead to decreasing working conditions for the working population and a widening of the gap between rich and poor.

All that this policy will achieve is to allow the wealthy to use their increased profits to further their political influence and to use this influence in the political establishments of Europe so that all aspects of society can be reduced to economy for economy’s sake. (“Economic” 15).

In another letter (“Immigrant” 17), O’Donnell, makes clear that he does not oppose immigration, but the lack of regulations that is leading to a “two-tier economy on US lines”. He describes the influx of Eastern Europeans as “unregulated low-wage immigration”, which is undesirable, as it drives down wages; instead, what Ireland really needs is immigration along Canadian lines where “an active immigration programme encourages only the highly skilled and highly educated”. Thus, while calling for an end to US-style monopoly capitalism, he reproduces the same kind of discourse that reduces skilled immigrants to a variable, mirroring the reduction of society to an equation that he sees as inherent in this type of economic system he claims to oppose.

Not everybody who is critical of capitalism also resorts to fear-mongering about the effects on the labour market. In the wake of the citizenship referendum, Gene Kerrigan

(“Referendum”) accuses those of hypocrisy who are in favour of constitutional change that would deprive children born to foreign citizens in Ireland of Irish citizenship. He points out that those people often argue that citizenship should be linked to “a sense of belonging to a community, of commitment to a society, and of loyalty to a country”. Evidentially, those are the values Myers fears are neglected for economy’s sake. Kerrigan even goes a step further and states:

We don’t have “community” or “society” anymore, [...] we have “markets”. The market demands that we stop a personal postal service in rural areas. It demands that private buses cherry-pick routes, and people in unprofitable areas get to walk. Screw community. And what demand is made of any of us that we be “loyal” to this country? None. There isn’t a single “loyalty” demand of any of us. [...] We can take an Irish education and go sell our skills to the highest international bidder. We “outsource” jobs, invest wherever we get the biggest return – it’s called globalism.

Kerrigan implies that the interests of the “markets” are the driving force that dictates the further development of the Irish state. Just like bus services only pick up people if they live in profitable areas, the economy only picks up immigrant workers that contribute to its expansion and promise financial gains. And yet, even those who do actively serve the community such as “nurses from the Philippines” and the “thousands of immigrants [that] keep the health system running” are not fully accepted into the Irish community and their children are denied Irish citizenship. Kerrigan, therefore, criticises the pre-eminence of the market on different grounds than Myers and his followers. He believes that racist attitudes towards immigrants are a consequence of the lack of “community” and “society”. Thus, it’s not immigration that threatens the Irish community, but, on the contrary, the subordination of all aspects of life to economic consideration.

7.3. Exploitation of Immigrant Workers

A great number of articles denounce the Irish employment market as exploitative, because it provides the employers with a much stronger position than their employees. This is particularly the case in respect to those workers that still require work permits. These permits put migrant workers in a very unfavourable position, as they only grant permission to work for a single employer. This procedure makes migrant workers dependent on the company they work for, particularly because it is the company that has to renew the permits; hence, every complaint about work conditions could possibly lead to the loss of

work permits and repatriation. Anne Lucey (“Work permit” 4) explains that the arrangement is a form of “‘bonded slavery’ [...] that might suit market forces but ha[s] no place in a civilised society”.

Even though Eastern European immigrants from the new member states of the EU no longer require a work permit, they are still vulnerable to exploitation. Chris Dooley maintains that for a significant number of migrant workers coming to Ireland has been a good experience (“Exploitation” 5); yet, reports of exploitation frequently surfaced in the media. Most commonly linguistic deficits and a lack of knowledge of their employment rights put Eastern Europeans at risk. Generally the articles on the exploitation of Eastern European migrants see the root of the problem in the government’s measures to make welfare benefits available only to those workers that have lived in Ireland for a longer period than two years. Niamh Kavanagh from the *Irish Times* explains the dilemma faced by many of those people lured to Ireland by the prospect of easily getting a lucrative job.

“When they get here, the reality is very different. Sometimes, there is no job and some end up in emergency accommodation or destitute”, says O’Keeffe [of the Migrant Rights Centre]. It is a new trend also witnessed by the Immigration Council of Ireland, who say people do not realise the cost of living here and find their money runs out after three days. But when many have spent their savings to get here or borrowed heavily, going home is not an option. (“Money” 4)

Yet, even after they find employment, their financial situation renders them vulnerable to exploitation. They simply cannot afford to lose their job and would therefore accept irregular working hours and poor payment. Dooley cites Malgorzata Kozik from the Polish Embassy in Dublin, who complains that it is common that “Polish citizens who complain about their working conditions [are] sacked at the spot. [...] Employers know that there are queues of Polish people lining up for work and believe that they can act with impunity” (“Exploitation”). In another article, Dooley criticises the existence of certain loopholes that allow employers to pay salaries below the minimum wage by classifying employees as still in training. To underline that point, he refers to the case of a Lithuanian man who, for eleven months, had been paid less than the minimum wage because apparently he had “not yet perfected the art of walking the dog”. Given that bending the law as such is legally possible, it comes as no surprise that many commentators perceive the employment system as inadequate for an immigration-heavy society. Orla O’Neill takes that stance, writing:

As a country, we should be ashamed of ourselves to have the brass neck to invite and welcome Poles and citizens of the other accession states into our places of employment and communities because we need their assistance to develop economically; but if those employment and community systems fail them we refuse to assist them. ("Plight" 17)

The campaigners against exploitation perceive the migration flows from a different perspective as those who see economic growth as the ultimate objective. They put human beings at the centre of attention and often focus on the problems of individual migrants. This is a far cry from the discourse that constructs migrants as an economic variable and reduces them to their skills and their potential value for the economy. The main criticism is directed against government policies and individual employers, not, as reported in the previous chapter, against the system in its entirety. The assumption that migrant workers should enjoy the same rights and privileges as the native population is taken for granted and based on humanist reasoning, not on strategic thinking as in the case of Downes ("Economy" 17), who based this demand for equal treatment on the consideration that Ireland was competing for skilled labour with other European countries.

8. Conclusion

This thesis has endeavoured to determine how Eastern European immigrants to Ireland were perceived by three Irish newspapers – *The Irish Times*, *The Sunday Independent* and *The Irish News* - and to what extent the historical, cultural and religious similarities between Ireland and Eastern Europe, Poland in particular, continued to play a role in the discursive construction of these migrants. For that reason the analytical part of this thesis has been divided in two main chapters. The first chapter is guided by categories that were established deductively, relying on prior research on the construction of Eastern Europe as a Western Europe's "other" and by historical research on the manifold parallels that existed between Ireland and Eastern Europe during the 19th century. The second chapter, on the other hand, is based on categories that emerged inductively from the data selected and analyses the representation of Eastern European immigrants as an asset whose only value is an economic one.

Concerning the references to historical similarities, a clear pattern emerged: they were either made in respect to Poland, or to the whole of Eastern Europe. No other nationality with a sizable immigrant community in Ireland, besides the Polish, was specifically mentioned in that context. This reveals a *longue durée* of Irish sympathies for Poland, which have been so openly expressed in the 19th century. In the case of Hungary, which was the second Eastern European nation that enjoyed a particular affinity with Ireland during the 19th century, no conclusion on whether or not this affinity persisted could be drawn. Even after the enlargement of the EU in 2004 Hungarian immigration to Ireland hardly existed and Hungary was consequently never in the focus of news coverage.

As for Poland, many of the references found in Irish newspapers were surprisingly similar to those 19th-century sources cited by Róisín Healy. One such example was found in an obituary for the late Pope John Paul II in which the author claims that the "two countries are strikingly similar in their history, the struggle of the people for freedom and independence, [and for] an end to religious persecution" ("Pontiff" 2). The ease with which the conviction that the Polish and the Irish peoples had very much in common was expressed suggests that this statement represents a dominant discourse. This is true for the Irish as well as for the Polish perspective alike. Whenever Polish people were given a voice in the papers selected, they were likely to refer to the same common traits. The Polish foreign

minister, for instance, claimed that the two countries had the “same culture, feeling of history and values” (Bréadún “MEP” 10). The fact that he did not feel the necessity to back up that statement with any specific data suggests that he equally considers those similarities to be common sense.

While comparisons with Poland are commonplace in regard to the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland occupies a slightly different place in the discourse on similarities with Eastern Europe. It is often linked to the more recent history of the whole of Eastern Europe under the rule of either Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union. Particularly authors that are outspoken Irish Republicans tend to compare the British rule in Northern Ireland to the Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe. Similar comparisons to Nazi ruled Eastern Europe are less frequent and, when applied, usually spark angry reactions. This reveals that unlike comparisons with Soviet rule, comparisons with Nazi Germany stand outside the dominant discourse. One thing is obvious though, comparisons with the Soviet Union or Nazi Germany are almost exclusively made in respect to Northern Ireland. The comparisons between the whole island of Ireland and Poland, on the other hand, are more likely to refer to 19th-century history and the common experience of Catholicism.

The aforementioned references mainly pointed back to a time when Ireland and Poland simultaneously suffered from similar circumstances. Another relevant discourse, by contrast, compares contemporary Eastern Europe with the Republic of Ireland of the 1970s. In this discourse Ireland takes the place as a mediator between the economic core of the European Union and the new member states. The fact that Ireland had an underdeveloped economy by the time it joined and managed to draw level with Europe’s richest countries within a short period predisposes Ireland, according to a number of authors, to be a model for the accession states. The economic development is, however, only one in which Ireland has outdistanced Eastern Europe. The accession states, having just recently broken free from Soviet domination, are presented as leading the same post-colonial discussion about the future of their identity within the EU which Ireland led in the 1970. Again Ireland is positioned as a model to follow, because, unlike many critics had predicted, the Irish have not lost their national character; on the contrary, Irishness has flourished.

Besides one reference of Northern Ireland as a possible role model for the Balkans, the discourse on Ireland as a role model for Eastern Europe was almost exclusively restricted

to the Republic of Ireland. This is largely the case because the discourse is heavily bound up with the comparison of the economic situation, and Northern Ireland simply did not experience such an impressive transformation from a poor rural country to an economic powerhouse. Yet some authors even went so far as to place parts of Northern Ireland on the same stage of development as Eastern European countries emerging from communism. This happened in an article by Seamus McKinney ("Man with" 14), who cited an American economist, who passed exactly that verdict about the stage of Derry's economy.

At large, most authors acknowledge that even though Ireland and Eastern Europe share many similar historical experiences, Ireland has moved economically and culturally much closer to the rest of Western Europe. By 2004 many of the aspects that are still part of Eastern European life such as poverty, emigration and high unemployment were no longer part of the Irish experience. On the other hand, many of the experiences of modernisation that Western Europe had made several decades earlier such as immigration and multiculturalism were relatively new to the Irish people. This explains the representation of Ireland as placed between East and West, sharing characteristics with both but being a part of neither.

With images of Ireland's past experiences of poverty and emigration in mind, many journalists derived from them a moral obligation to be welcoming to those who seek refuge or simply better living conditions in Ireland. Steve Garner termed this stance the "historical duty argument" (159). It equates contemporary immigrants with the economically and politically disadvantaged Irish of the past, who emigrated to America and the United Kingdom. The argument is entirely based on the Irish people's experience with emigration and does not include other aspects of historical similarities such as imperial domination or religious persecution. Consequently, there is little to no distinction made between legal immigrants, such as those coming from the new Eastern European member states of the EU, asylum seekers and illegal immigrants; the basic argument comprises to all of them.

Furthermore, the collected data shows that the historical duty argument is also linked to questions of Irish national identity. On the one hand there is considerable pride in the global Irish culture that has been established through the diaspora, on the other hand the traditional markers of Irishness such as land, religion and the Gaelic language are still held in high esteem. Yet, those traditional pillars of Irishness are increasingly viewed as

threatened by large-scale immigration. Hence, many of those applying the historical duty argument refer to Ireland's historical experience with cultural imperialism to exhort the creation of a multicultural society which does not impose restrictions on the cultural expression of the new members of Irish society.

Another facet of the historical duty argument links the debate on immigration with the collective memory of St. Patrick. It evokes the myth created around Ireland's national hero who allegedly came to Ireland as a slave, abducted from his native Wales. Those who employ this argument infer from Patrick's suffering as a slave and his position as an immigrant an obligation to treat contemporary immigrants with generosity and compassion.

The subject of illegal Irish immigrants presently living in the United States also attracts considerable attention in Irish newspapers. Similarly to references to Ireland's history of emigration and to the history of St. Patrick, this rhetorical device is employed to imply a moral obligation of the Irish people to treat immigrants with empathy. It points to the hypocrisies of the Irish government which is actively lobbying for the naturalisation of illegal Irish immigrants in the US – who are euphemistically referred to as “undocumented” instead of illegal – but denies illegal immigrants to Ireland the same treatment. Understandably, this argument is exclusively employed in reference to illegal immigrants and does therefore not touch on the issue of Eastern European immigration to Ireland.

An alternative discourse that was entirely dedicated to legal immigration from the new EU member states focused on economic considerations. Whether or not immigrants should be welcomed mostly depended on a simple cost-benefit analysis, for which the main criterion was the immigrants' potential contribution to continuing economic growth. Thus Eastern European workers were often constructed as an economic commodity needed to sustain Ireland's economic growth. One such utterance was voiced by the chief economist of the Bank of Ireland, Dan McLaughlin, who described the possibility that foreign workers could simply return home if they are no longer needed as the “one advantage of having a huge number of immigrants” (Suiter “Influx”). Thus he revealed that Eastern European migrants were considered a commodity that could be used at will as long as it is beneficial for the Irish economy and easily disposed of in the case decreasing demand.

For the time being, however, those migrants are welcomed and presented as an asset for which it is worth competing. Northern Ireland proved no exception in this respect; the importance of Eastern European doctors to keep the services of the NHS going was openly acknowledged. The high number of third-level-educated immigrants was frequently welcomed and Eastern European craftsmen also received particular praise for their working habits and their reliability. Generally, the need for continuing immigration was presented as common sense in the newspapers selected. This may be due to their rather business oriented positions on economic matters, and should not be taken for granted for the entire Irish newspaper industry.

Occasional remarks suggest that there was also sizeable opposition against on-going immigration in Irish society, even though those positions are not frequently mirrored in *The Irish Times*, *The Sunday Independent* and *The Irish News*. This counter argument was mostly restricted to letters to the editor and to Kevin Myers' column *An Irishman's Diary* which appears in *The Irish Times*. Myers and his followers saw continuing immigration as a threat to the essence of Irishness and demanded greater regulation of the employment market. Apart from xenophobic and "new racist" undertones, which were often presented as the *vox populi*, these references also comprised a certain degree of criticism of capitalism.

More profound criticism of the pre-eminence of the market came from such people as Gene Kerrigan ("Referendum") who believes, contrary to Myers, that it is not immigration that threatens the Irish community, but the subordination of all aspects of life to economic considerations. Kerrigan's position is echoed by some who argue for a society that does not view immigrants as simply an economic commodity but rather as human beings deserving the same treatment and support as the native Irish population. Those people denounced the Irish employment market as exploitive on the grounds that it placed employers in a much stronger position than immigrant workers. This is particularly the case in respect to those workers that still require work permits, because those permits only grant permission to work for a single employer. This procedure makes migrant workers dependent on the company they work for. Yet, even Eastern European immigrants from the new member states of the EU, who no longer require a work permit, were still vulnerable to exploitation. This is easily explained by the government's measures to exclude immigrant workers from the welfare system for the first two years of employment. Thus, many migrant workers cannot afford to

be without a job for even a short period of time and accept exploitive working conditions rather than lose their job. Criticism in this respect was thus mainly directed against the government who put these unjust regulations in place.

It is safe to say that the discourse on Eastern European Immigrants as an economic commodity that ensures the continuing growth of the Irish economy was the dominant one between 2004 and 2006. The period of scrutiny ended before the recent financial crisis; the unpleasant consequences of this crisis for Ireland are therefore in no way reflected in this paper. It would be an interesting topic for further research to trace the development of the discourses identified in this study to see whether or not these recent events caused noticeable changes.

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Zusammenfassung auf Deutsch

Die vorliegende Diplomarbeit ist eine Medienanalyse, die sich mit der Darstellung osteuropäischer Einwanderer in drei irischen Zeitungen – *Irish Times*, *Sunday Independent* und *Irish News* - im Zeitraum zwischen Mai 2004 und Dezember 2006 befasst. Besondere Aufmerksamkeit ist auf die Darstellung historischer, politischer und religiöser Gemeinsamkeiten zwischen Irland und Osteuropa gerichtet. Diese Gemeinsamkeiten waren im 19. Jahrhunderte, zu einer Zeit als Irland und verschiedene osteuropäische Länder beträchtliche Parallelen aufwiesen, in irischen Medien vielfach hervorgestrichen worden.

Diese Arbeit stützt sich in Bezug auf die Darstellung von Osteuropa als rückständiges Gegenbild zum fortschrittlichen Westen auf die Forschungen der Historiker Larry Wolff und Maria Todorova. Was die Rezeption Osteuropas in 19. Jahrhundert vom Standpunkt der irischen Nation angeht, basierte sie auf der Arbeit der irischen Historikerin Róisín Healy.

Dem Analyseteil ist ein grundlegender Überblick über die irische Migrationsgeschichte von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis heute vorangestellt. Dieser historische Abriss soll, zum einen, die herausragende Position, die Emigration im kollektiven Gedächtnis der Iren einnimmt, erläutern und zum anderen, den Übergang Irlands von einem Auswanderungs- zu einem Einwanderungsland in Zahlen und Fakten verständlich machen.

Der Analyseteil dieser Diplomarbeit gliedert sich in zwei Teile. Im ersten Teil wird der Frage nach der Darstellung historischer, kultureller und religiöser Gemeinsamkeiten zwischen Irland und Osteuropa nachgegangen. Es wird dabei klar, dass es tatsächlich eine Art *longue durée* gegeben haben dürfte, da Verweise auf historische Parallelen zwischen den beiden Regionen, im Besonderen aber zwischen Irland und Polen, zum wiederholten Male vorkamen. Nordirland wurde oft losgelöst von der Republik Irland behandelt; speziell in Leserbriefen wurde es von republikanisch gesinnten Kreisen oftmals mit Osteuropa unter sowjetischer Herrschaft verglichen. Schlussendlich wurde klar, dass besonders Irlands eigene Erfahrung von Emigration eine reichliche Quelle für Vergleiche bat. Es wurde von vielen Journalisten von der Tatsache, dass jahrhundertlang viel Iren nach Amerika und Großbritannien auswanderten, eine moralische Verpflichtung abgeleitet, Fremden gegenüber großzügig und mitfühlend zu sein. In diesem Sinne wurde auch häufig die zwiespältige Haltung der irischen Regierung gegenüber illegalen Einwanderern kritisiert. Auf

der einen Seite setzt sich die Regierung für ein Bleiberecht von illegal in den USA lebenden Iren ein, auf der anderen Seite gesteht sie dasselbe Recht illegalen Einwanderern in Irland nicht zu.

Der zweite Teil der Inhaltsanalyse beschäftigt sich mit der Darstellung osteuropäischer Einwanderer als wirtschaftlicher Faktor. Dieser Diskurs beschränkte sich zumeist auf eine einfache Kosten-Nutzen Rechnung, die dem vorrangigen Ziel des anhaltenden Wirtschaftswachstums alles andere unterordnete. Einwanderer wurden daher nur als eine volkswirtschaftliche Variable gesehen, die unter den gegebenen Umständen positiv ist, bei veränderter Wirtschaftslage aber auch negativ sein könnte. Diese Konzentration auf ökonomische Aspekte wurde jedoch auch von verschiedenen Seiten in Frage gestellt. Während die einen durchaus Kapitalismuskritisch argumentierten und auf ausbeuterische Strukturen in der irischen Gesellschaft hinwiesen, sahen andere überhaupt die irische Gesellschaft als von übermäßigem Zuzug gefährdet an und verlangten, dass die nationale Identität nicht auf dem Altar des Wirtschaftswachstums geopfert werden dürfe. Obwohl klar wurde, dass ein oppositioneller, die Einwanderung ablehnender Diskurs ebenso in Zentrum der irischen Gesellschaft vorhanden war, befanden sich diese Stimmen, in den Artikel der ausgewählten Zeitungen, stets in der Minderheit.