COSMOPOLITAN
IRELAND

Globalisation and Quality of Life

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This book is dedicated to our mothers, Adele and Maureen, and to our children, Ilyana and Ronan. You have taught us about so many things, including the cycle of intergenerational love, care and responsibility that has so enriched our lives and has informed our work. We are deeply grateful.

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Acknowledgements

Introduction

Ireland is undergoing a period of both economic and cultural renewal. Between 1991 and 2003 the Irish economy grew by an average of 6.8 per cent per annum, peaking at 11.1 per cent in 1999. Unemployment fell from 18 per cent in the late 1980s to 4.2 per cent in 2005, and the Irish Debt/GDP ratio fell from 92 per cent in 1993 to 38 per cent in 1999. Throughout the 1990s Irish living standards rose dramatically to the point where the country is now, at least by some measures, one of the richest in the world, and has the fourth highest GDP per capita in the world. But, paradoxically, Irish people are the most heavily indebted in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). At the same time Ireland has been experiencing major social and cultural change, which in some ways has secularised, liberalised and cosmopolitanised Ireland: emigration was reversed, which facilitated a 'new multiculturalism'; divorce and homosexuality were legalised; the shift from rural to urban patterns of living accelerated. Most significantly, Ireland was effectively transformed from a premodern, peasant rural community to a postmodern, high-technology urbanised society. The period coincided with the Peace Process in Northern Ireland, culminating in the Belfast Agreement in 1998, the decommissioning of IRA weapons in 2005, and the emergence (albeit fragile) of a postnationalistic political discourse.

Coinciding with this economic growth are a series of social and cultural changes that have led some commentators to believe that Ireland is becoming globalised, or cosmopolitanised. During the same time frame as the economic boom, the cultural landscape was transformed as well; for this marked the emergence of the 'Irish cultural renaissance', of the globalisation of local talents, cultures and traditions. The decade produced a steady flow of international entertainment exports such as U2, The Corrs, The Cranberries, Enya, etc. The Irish film industry moguls and sports heroes flourished; Ireland won the Eurovision Song Contest five times during the 1990s, most notably in 1994 when *Riverdance* was first performed as an interval act, the same year that the term 'Celtic Tiger' appeared (in a Morgan Stanley report of August 1994). As well as producing local products for global export, Ireland became a new commodity market

for designer goods and commodities of all sorts, and by the late 1990s consumer spending rose dramatically to unprecedented levels. More recently, Ireland has been described as the most globalised society in the world. The reversal of emigration, increasing levels of migrant labourers, the high levels of returning Irish émigrés or 'homing pigeons' accompanied by foreign-acquired cultural and educational capital (and sometimes families as well) has enabled both business and tourism to market Ireland as more 'cosmopolitan' than ever before. With air traffic figures of Irish holidaymakers reaching unprecedented levels, it is clear that Ireland is becoming an increasingly mobile society. However, all of these factors obscure the basis of much contemporary debate: what exactly do we mean when we describe Irish society as increasingly globalised and cosmopolitan? Is globalisation synonymous with cosmopolitanism? What is the relationship between economic globalisation and cultural cosmopolitanism? Are we really becoming more cosmopolitan? Is cosmopolitanism, like ethnic food or fashion, only significant as something that can be consumed? If so, are we in danger of commodifying ourselves? If we are becoming cosmopolitan, is that necessarily a good thing? Are we, as McWilliams argues (2005: 215), 'Hi-Cos' or 'Hibernian Cosmopolitans' who embrace a fervent localism or particularism to compensate for our complicity in globalised commodity fetishism?

What unites the four sections of the book is the way in which they all reveal how social transformation in Ireland and its associated paradoxes can be understood in the context of contemporary debates on cosmopolitanism. The term cosmopolitan contains its own inherent contradictions, since it contains both elite and egalitarian pretensions. On the one hand, to describe someone as 'cosmopolitan' implies that they are 'worldly', 'sophisticated' and are a globally conscious person with wide international experience, a concept which has been critiqued because it presumes entitlement to an elite social and occupational status and various material and bureaucratic privileges (Calhoun, 2003), and is historically linked to the quasi-colonial expansion of urban centres or metropolitan regions in the nineteenth century as a legitimation of their encroachment on geopolitically dispersed or vulnerable outlying territories (Simmel, 1997). On the other hand, the ancient Greek philosophers used this term derived from *cosmos* (world) + *polis* (city, people, citizenry) to describe a (potentially) more egalitarian concept of 'world citizenship', understood as a universal love of humankind as a whole, regardless of nation. The more emancipatory understandings of cosmopolitan-

ism understood as 'world citizenship' have been recently revived by theorists such as Habermas and Held, who are attempting to develop a version of 'cosmopolitan citizenship' that can provide a moral and political framework of universal rights and political consensus which could challenge neoliberal globalisation. What we try to show here is that the Irish pursuit of the former definition of cosmopolitanism as social distinction, as opposed to the latter, as global citizenship or inclusion, results in an impoverished notion of cosmopolitanism that is in danger of reducing quality of life in Ireland. The contradictory and paradoxical understandings of what constitutes cosmopolitanism reveals not only moral fragmentation and the increasing lack of consensus around what constitutes 'the good life' in Ireland, but also provides concrete examples of the multiple meanings behind the term 'cosmopolitanism' itself; as both a socially elite status that can be purchased, and as a potentially emancipatory concept of 'world citizenship' committed to reducing, not increasing, forms of social exclusion.

Coinciding with economic and cultural transformations is the increasing concern expressed in public and political debate with regards to what constitutes the 'good life' in Ireland. In November 2004 the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) published the findings of a survey measuring the quality of life in 111 countries, finding that the Republic of Ireland is the happiest society in the world. Using a grid of indices including health, life expectancy, political freedom, unemployment, climate, political stability, security, gender equality, community and family life, Ireland scored 8.33 points out of 10. 'Ireland wins', according to the EIU, 'because it successfully combines the most desirable elements of the new – the fourth highest gross domestic product per head in the world in 2005, low unemployment, political liberties – with the preservation of certain cosy elements of the old, such as stable family and community life' (EIU, 2004). However, according to current Irish estimates as many as one in four men and one in two women suffer some form of depression, and the growing rates of binge drinking, suicide and other forms of self-harm in contemporary Ireland would appear to be distinctly at odds with this finding. Does the fact that we appear to be 'happier' mean that we have a better 'quality of life'? Is 'quality of life' synonymous with 'the good life'? Is the pursuit of happiness an adequate ideal for a cosmopolitan society? This book will explore the various meanings of the term 'quality of life' and how the recent diversification and increased multiculturalism in Ireland have provided, at the same

time, ways to overcome historical mechanisms of oppression and repression, as well as providing a sense of moral confusion or anomie that is a source of melancholy and lack of wellbeing, which raises challenging questions about our quality of life.

As well, we will examine the relationship between these two forms of cosmopolitanism and what we understand as quality of life. In this book, we will identify and analyse economic, political, social and cultural transformations, all of which feed into the widespread perception that Ireland is increasingly multicultural, global and therefore 'cosmopolitan', and will contrast this with a notion of how this positive new image does not match the reality of Ireland as a deeply stratified society. Moreover, we will examine how, despite allegedly high scores on 'quality of life' indices, at the level of the everyday there are many negative consequences of rapid social transformation such as inflation, rising inequality, overcrowded health infrastructures and traffic congestion. As a result, the negative dimensions of globalisation and rapid social transformation are often attributed to the rising numbers of new migrant labourers, despite the fact that the real causes are more directly linked with the restructuring of labour due to global capital, poor management of Irish health and welfare infrastructure, and low taxation and government spending. The urgent question concerns the relationship between economic and cultural modernisation: is being happier the realisation of the good life? Does the Celtic Tiger represent an improvement in our overall quality of life, or moral bankruptcy and spiritual dereliction? If so, is there a solution beyond condemnation, repudiation and a nostalgic retreat to the past? In contrast, we will examine modern cosmopolitan culture by articulating the secular-humanist values and postconventional morality that are the foundational principles and aspirational ideals of world citizenship. And the limitations of nationalistic preoccupations in the past are greatly exacerbated presently, when all of these contexts are being thoroughly transformed by accelerated modernisation and globalisation. Global neoliberal political economy stands in need of the institutions of cosmopolitan society, cosmopolitan citizenship and global democracy.

In order to understand this increasingly reconfigured relationship between the global and the local, we need to try to grasp the complexity of interactions between economic transformation and other socio-cultural transformations. Within popular rhetoric, the relationship between culture and economy is often seen in unidirectional terms. For instance, at times this relationship is posited in economically

determinist terms, as a direct causal product of the economic boom whereby a 'newfound self-confidence' emerged directly from the liberalisation of internal markets, matched by the celebration of individual rights and liberties. This position is consistent with the historical materialist thesis whereby the economic base determines the cultural superstructure. In contrast, other arguments exhibit a more culturally deterministic position such as that expressed by Fitzgerald who argues that the Celtic Tiger economic boom and the accompanying prosperity emerged out of a new self-confidence and a 'positive, outward-looking attitude that affects business, the educational system, and politics'. For him, cultural change 'is probably the single most important fact underlying the current Irish economic renaissance' (2000: 55). Fitzgerald articulates a dialectical view of the relationship between culture and economy in the Hegelian idealist tradition, which holds that history (or in this case the material reality of the 'economic miracle') is the materialisation of Spirit or '*Geist*'.

The position we will take is a dialectical/reflexive/recursive theory characteristic of what is called the communicative or reflexive turn in social theory, which emphasises the multiplicity of interactions amongst the different domains of economy, society and culture. This approach involves a more critical perspective on the relationship between economy and culture; including the argument that culture as social critique has given way to culture as economic commodity. For instance, Kirby, Gibbons and Cronin argue that the Celtic Tiger has been inextricably bound up with a cultural discourse prioritising individualism, entrepreneurship, mobility, flexibility, innovation and competitiveness both as personal attributes and as dominant cultural values which displace earlier discourses prioritising national development, national identity, family, self-sacrifice, self-sufficiency and nationalism (Kirby, Gibbons and Cronin, 2002: 13). In turn, this displacement can itself produce new critiques, dissentions and subversions. Yet, in dominant discussions of the cosmopoli- tanisation of Ireland, there is a tendency to conflate the global with negative tendencies and the local with positive, or vice versa, without examining how the new cosmopolitan Ireland contains positive and negative elements of each. The diverse and antagonistic character of the transformations that have accompanied Ireland's experience of globalisation have produced a variety of cultural and social collisions between different and often incompatible forms of life, collisions between local and global, traditional and modern (or perhaps between traditional and postmodern), between Catholic

and secular, and between rural and urban; tensions experienced as polar opposites but which are intimately interconnected in complex and fluid ways.

This book, we hope, will contribute to existing debate on cosmopolitanism, globalisation and quality of life in several ways. The few recent texts that have been able to transcend what is at times a tendency towards insularity and self-referentiality that characterises some Irish social and cultural analysis have quite correctly identified the source of the problem as the gap between social integration and economic growth in Irish society, but in a way that is predominantly critical, deconstructive and dystopian. They have demonstrated how Ireland's neoliberal economic policies have compromised commitments to collective social solidarity and community, but have not provided a sustained theoretical model for what we can do about this. They illustrate how the new culture of individualism, affluence and consumerism has meant the loss of solidarity and community, but do not identify any new basis of solidarity or community. In this book we will go beyond the deconstructive moment in existing critiques by focusing explicitly on how cosmopolitan ideals and the institutions and practices of cosmopolitan citizenship could provide a new basis of solidarity that could address and alleviate the problems of quality of life in contemporary Ireland. This project will explore the basis of a revitalised radical democratic politics, a cosmopolitan political imaginary in the social spaces and cultural practices in which it appears and may be cultivated. We will also explore what a cosmopolitan pedagogy running through the educational curriculum might look like in the context of a globalised economy and a multicultural society. This aim of establishing a reconstructive project as an alternative to neoliberalism is not simply relevant to Ireland, but to global politics in general, and is the focus of international scholarship in contemporary political, social and moral theory, and is at the cutting edge of debates on citizenship and globalisation.

This book will be structured as follows: in the first section, we will examine the dynamics of Irish globalisation, and will look at various economic, political and cultural transformations which have fed into the common perception that Ireland has become 'cosmopolitanised'. Here, we will show how Ireland's recent economic boom has been accompanied by increased, rather than decreased, levels of social inequality and political corruption. This section very clearly sets up the framework of the dual character of concepts of

cosmopolitanism, which will be followed up in future sections by showing how an emerging elite of Irish society is more wealthy and mobile than ever before (and thus more 'elite'), yet growing social inequality in Ireland demonstrates how possibilities for cultivating an emancipatory version of cosmopolitanism (as pertaining to 'world citizenship') are not being realised. The next section looks explicitly at the two main social indicators that are used to claim Ireland is being globalised and 'cosmopolitanised': the increasing multiethnic population, and increased representations of multiethnicity in the media and advertising. In this section, we will show how the reversal of emigration and increasing acceptance of migrant labourers have meant that Ireland's ethnic composition is now more multicultural than ever before, but that rising levels of economic inequality, racism and cutbacks to the welfare state reveal how Ireland is now 'globalised', but not at all 'cosmopolitanised', in the emancipatory sense of the word. In this section, we will also examine new relationships between 'Irishness' and consumption. Here, we will look at new ways Ireland is being consumed, packaged and marketed in a global context. We will illustrate how Ireland is both a commodity form and a new commodity market, and is being marketed as simultaneously 'local' and 'global', premodern 'Celtic' and neoliberal 'Tiger'.

In the third section we will examine and critique various indicators of quality of life, contrasting findings that Ireland has a high quality of life with recent data on binge drinking, overeating and depression. In this section, we show how binge drinking, overeating and depression are all symptoms of rapid social change in Ireland that both reflect the negative effects of the conditions of neoliberal globalisation, and also reflect a desire for 'communitas', for connection that will ameliorate these conditions. In the last section, we examine possibilities for a radical democratic politics and cosmopolitan citizenship in Ireland and will raise the question as to what kind of 'Ireland' we want to construct in the future. In this section, we make two recommendations that would truly 'cosmopolitanise' Ireland: changes to taxation and distribution, and a programme of moral education that would help cultivate cosmopolitanism. In our conclusion, we explore recent international theoretical debates on cosmopolitanism, globalisation and citizenship, which explore the possibility of imagining new, more 'postnational' citizenship and a radical democratic politics to contest the excesses of globalisation and therefore improve the quality of life in contemporary Ireland and beyond.

Part 1

Globalisation and
Social Inequality in Ireland

1
Economics:
Social Inequality and the Celtic Tiger

Orienting Questions

- Has the economic boom in Ireland been accompanied by rising levels of personal debt and social inequality?
- Have rising levels of affluence in Ireland been accompanied by a better quality of life?
- What is quality of life?
- Does rising affluence mean that public services (health, education, social security, housing) have been improved?
- Are there alternatives to the neoliberal model of economic and social progress?

This chapter will overview how the recent rise in economic productivity in Ireland has in part been achieved through neoliberal economic policy including social partnerships, tax breaks for corporations and a policy of wage restraint. As a result, the benefits of this economic boom are unevenly experienced within the Irish population, and while the boom has facilitated a transformation in collective cultural identity that can be characterised as positive, there has been a rise in poverty, job insecurity and social inequality. Despite recent studies which give Ireland a high ranking in terms of quality of life, rising social inequality and an underdeveloped transport, health and welfare infrastructure raise serious questions with regards to the effects of short-term neoliberal economic strategy in Ireland.

IRELAND IN THE CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

A great deal of contemporary debate has been concerned with the diverse and contradictory effects of globalisation on local economies, cultures and societies. The impact of the various transformations on Irish society associated with globalisation and economic modernisation has been an issue of strong contestation in the public sphere. However, increasingly economists from both within

and outside Ireland are commending the alleged positive effects of globalisation in facilitating the Celtic Tiger economic boom. A recent article in *The Economist* (Peet, 2004: 125) argues that Ireland's recent economic modernisation combined with a vestigial traditionalism have enabled Ireland to avoid the social problems characteristic of other countries, and that this modernisation of the Irish economy and the accompanying erosion of Catholic and patriarchal authority have liberalised and cosmopolitanised Irish culture (in an essentially European manner) while avoiding the social inequalities of the US. Such accounts illustrate a particular point of view shared by many entrepreneurs and politicians, a view that celebrates the recent claim that 'Ireland is one of the most globalised economies in the world' (Kearney, 2003: 47). This reflects a particular view, which, although not shared by all is quite hegemonic in the public sphere, that Ireland has 'arrived' and that it has successfully negotiated a 'third term' or path between a variety of seemingly opposed options: European and American, traditional and modern, communitarian and individualistic, and implies a progressive dialectical dynamic whereby opposing tendencies in Irish society have been reconciled in a satisfying synthesis. There is some cautioning amongst analysts with regard to the lack of long-term economic strategy, but overall the consensus is that Ireland's economic boom is a model to be emulated.

At the level of everyday life, however, the effects of the Celtic Tiger are not so simple, and the consensus is not nearly so clear, for an examination of talk radio, the media and other dimensions of the public sphere reveals a variety of contradicting and competing public discourses with regards to the perceived effects of the Celtic Tiger economic boom. We have recently argued (Keohane and Kuhling, 2004) that the diverse and antagonistic character of these transformations which have accompanied Ireland's experience of accelerated modernisation have produced a variety of cultural and social collisions between different and often incompatible forms of life, collisions between 'traditional' and 'modern', between Catholic and secular, between rural and urban, and between local and global, understood as discursively constructed binary oppositions, which reflect how difficult it is to make sense of these rapid social transformations. The collisions have produced a variety of social problems in Ireland, and are quite literally manifested in the increased rate of traffic accidents in recent years. Our research is not simply confined to literal collisions, for we argue that 'traffic accidents are a spectacular and literal representation of more general collisions occurring in

Irish society today, between vestigial traditionalism and accelerated modernization, between the local and the global, between the values and organizing principles of action of community and society' (Keohane and Kuhling, 2004: 49).

Collisions Between Cultural Representations of Ireland

The collision in Irish society between contradictory or incompatible lifeworlds tends to manifest itself in dichotomous and in some ways conflicting representations of 'time' in Irish society, dichotomies which are inherent in the oxymoronic character of the term 'Celtic Tiger'. This term has become the signifier of collective identity and vitality, a collective ego-ideal, yet the differential notions of 'time' underpinning these two signifiers in this term point towards a variety of contradictions. The term 'Celtic' invokes a premodern, romantic, 'spiritual', unified sense of history that is remote, primordial, prenational, and which transcends the divisive historical realities of modern Ireland. In contrast, the term 'Tiger' resonates with a different and in some ways opposite set of images, for it invokes the rhetoric of competitive individualism, energetic progress and globalised capital. This attendant ideology of survival of the fittest denotes the shift in Ireland towards a laissez-faire, neoliberal ideology (O'Hearn, 1998). The dichotomous images and temporalities underpinning the term Celtic Tiger are also reflected in the quite different representations of the 'romantic Ireland' propagated by Bord Fáilte and the thoroughly modern image of Ireland posed by the IDA: Bord Fáilte representations of Ireland tend to show Ireland as characterised by either a premodern 'glacial time' (Lash and Urry, 1994), as a 'lackadaisical premodern culture, inhabited by old men and rusting bicycles' (Cronin and O'Connor, 2003: 3) or as 'outside time', a 'timeless arcadia, the province of fairytale and myth' (Cronin and O'Connor, 2003: 14). On the other hand, the IDA represents Ireland as characterised by the instantaneous, 'accelerated time' of futuristic science fiction and cyberculture, as the fast paced, (post)modern and global exemplar of the new IT-driven economy.[1]

At first glance, these two incompatible images of Irish temporality, of Ireland as both associated with the past and the future, as both pre- and postmodern, appear radically opposed. These two experiences of time, these two quite different representations of Ireland are, however, not contradictory; rather they are interdependent in late modernity, for the local and the global, community and society, tradition and modernity are not forms of life that supersede one

another in linear historical progress, but that exist contemporane-
ously and interpenetrate with one another, collide and collude with
one another, in the time/space of contemporary Ireland. Following
Bauman's (2000) notion of 'liquid modernity', the peculiar nature
of Irish modernity involves multiple modernities, multiple invented
'traditions' and multiple processes of modernisation. Bauman's
metaphor of liquescence captures the notion that there is no
singular modernity, single modern world, or singular linear process
of modernisation that brought it into being. The experience of living
in contemporary Ireland is that of living in an in-between world,
in-between cultures and identities, an experience of liminality. This
liquidity of old and new, however, and the recent experience of
accelerated modernisation involve both continuity and change, and
therefore new versions of Irish identity involve both glacial and
accelerated time simultaneously, and invoke notions, simultaneously,
of what one might call the coexistence of both discourses of tradition
and modernity in Ireland.

Ireland's shift towards 'accelerated time' reflects the extent to
which speed and mobility are becoming the new form of capital in
global society, a trend that reveals a global tendency towards what
Virilio calls the 'dromocratic' or 'speed revolution' or the shift from
geopolitics to what he calls 'chrono-politics' (Virilio, 1995). The Irish
state's explicit commitment to positioning Ireland as a key global
centre in telecommunications, the Internet and electronic commerce
combined with the rapidly growing rate of Irish air passengers to
international destinations[2] both illustrate Irish people's desire for
mobility, and the impact of the 'speed revolution' on economic and
cultural life. Cronin describes how the speed revolution in Ireland
has meant an 'ideological gear change in Ireland where the pure
speed of the knowledge-intensive economy clashes with the different
pace and rhythm of groups in the society that cannot delocalise
and remain bound to place' (Cronin, 2002: 60). For example Cronin
speaks of how Travellers nomadic way of life is increasingly under
threat by mobile elites, which he describes as 'competing forms of
illegitimate and legitimate nomadicism occupying the same space of
circulation' (Cronin, 2002: 59). Similarly, the undeveloped transport
system and poor local roads in the west of Ireland compared to the
sophisticated bypasses on the Dublin–Galway roads illustrates how
the need of urban elites to access their holiday homes is prioritised
over the geographical mobility of the local population (Cronin, 2002:
61). These are just a few examples of how we are being differentially

affected by the 'chrono-politicisation of Ireland, the effects of the new time zones that are shaping Irish culture and society' (Cronin, 2002: 55).

In this way, time is in a sense one of the new dividing practices segregating and defining the new form of subalternality within Ireland, and illustrates that the new power/geometry of globalised 'time–space compression' also involves a new power/chronometry. These new dividing practices also have been manifest in the economic instrumentalism of Ireland's attitude towards multiculturalism and feminism. Recent research has demonstrated that Ireland has what we could call a multicultural economy, and is increasingly ethnically diverse, but this cultural diversity is accompanied by deeply entrenched inequalities. As Fanning (2002), Lentin and McVeigh (2002) and others have argued, Ireland has demonstrated an opportunistic approach to immigrants, and has imported economic migrants to fill low-paid, low-status positions that Irish people no longer want, adopting a 'guest worker' approach of allowing limited rights to 'temporary workers', which has severe negative impacts on workers and families. As a result of this and other more long-standing histories of institutional and other forms of racism, Fanning claims Ireland has what he calls a 'weak multiculturalism' where the 'image of diversity proliferates, but where the aim is to manage diversity rather than contest inequalities (Fanning, 2002: 179). Similarly, the persistence of gendered patterns of vertical segregation in the Irish occupational structure, despite the large number of women entering into the labour force as a 'reserve army of labour' in recent years, illustrates how economic opportunism has disguised itself as feminism.

RISING SOCIAL INEQUALITY

The implied fluidity of Bauman's (2000) metaphor of liquidity is not to say that these transitions are unproblematic, for an analysis of recent and rapid transformations in Irish society shows that quite the opposite is the case. In the Irish context, researchers are increasingly pointing out that a one-sided model of social progress which prioritises economic competitiveness over social cohesion and welfare drives Irish modernity. As Coulter points out, coexisting with the Celtic Tiger economic boom is the dependence of the Irish economy on multinational capital, the increase in social inequalities accompanying this so-called boom, and a lowering of quality of life due to inadequate public expenditure, all resulting from the pursuit

of short- versus long-term economic strategies. Kirby cautions that uncritically celebrating economic growth as itself indicative of 'social progress' overlooks the disjuncture between high levels of economic growth and its social outcomes (Kirby, 2004: 35), or what he has called the 'stark contrast between economic success and social failure' (Kirby, 2004: 5).

   A particularly significant manifestation of these collisions is a shift towards an individualist, neocorporatist ideology, despite Ireland's history of social cohesion and community solidarity and support in times of crisis, which was noticeable in impoverished communities (O'Neill, 1992) and during times such as the Famine and the resistance movements throughout Irish history. As Coulter points out, the self-congratulatory rhetoric that this Irish 'economic miracle' was a result of 'astute policy decisions', a 'highly educated work force', 'fiscal prudence in the late 1980s', and the success of 'social partnership agreements' masks the rising social inequalities within Ireland, the dependence of the Irish economy on foreign, specifically US-based, multinationals, and uncritically validates the ideology of the modernisation school of thought, a school known for its ethnocentrism, its hostility to 'tradition' and for its ideological conflation of capitalism with progress. Coulter argues that the celebration of Ireland's neocorporatist social relations and the rise in consumer spending despite the rise in social inequality, inadequate public expenditure and Ireland's economic dependence on global capital illustrate the revival of modernisationalist ideas in Ireland, and provide an empirical counterexample to Giddens's claim to the 'reflexivity of modern society' and the allegedly 'benign character' of globalisation (Coulter, 2003: 3–28). In his later works, Giddens (1998) argues that we are entering into a phase of reflexive modernity whereby the 'disembedding' and 're-embedding' processes of globalisation, understood as 'time space compression', both lift us out of the local and facilitate a new reflexivity and institutional adaptability. However, claims to the 'widespread affluence and contentment' of the Celtic Tiger, and claims to the vigorousness of the Irish economy and the benefits of 'flexibilisation' of the labour force that are quite prominent in Ireland, mask the extent to which limits on wage demands have increased the polarisation between rich and poor and that the greatest increase in jobs has been in the part-time, low-paid sectors, and mask the dependence of the Irish economy on global, specifically US-based multinationals[3] (O'Hearn, 2003: 17). These contradictions are a symptom of a more generalised problem,

of the decline in the power of individual nation states to offset the negative consequences of capitalism's crisis tendencies and the non-accountability of transnational global capital to any regulatory body. However, the acquiescence of the Irish state in this modernisation-ist discourse means that Ireland is, paradoxically, complicit in the neoliberal relations of the so-called New World Order while celebrating its status as a decolonising state, which illustrates a fundamental lack of reflexivity with regards to the dynamics of domination.

Coulter's claim that economic productivity has been accompanied by increased levels of social inequality is substantiated when taking into account the increase in income equality and relative poverty (Nolan, 2003), the exclusion of ever-growing percentages of the population from the housing market due to rising prices (Drudy and Punch, 2001), the rise in homelessness from 2,371 in 1992 to 5,581 in 2002 (Simonews, in Kirby, 2004: 35) and the persistence of profound structural inequalities in the health care system (Wren, 2003) and in the educational system (Smith and Hannon, in Kirby, 2004: 35). As well, there is strong evidence that tax and welfare systems are serving to widen not narrow the gap between rich and poor (Fitzgerald, 2000: 192). This increase in social inequality in Ireland despite the economic boom is also confirmed when considering Ireland within a global context, for according to the United Nations' Human Development Report, by the end of the twentieth century the Irish poverty rate was the highest in the EU, and by the late 1990s was the second most unequal country out of all OECD countries (Human Development Report, 2001: 182).

The Irish experience therefore illustrates some of the key paradoxes of economic globalisation wherein a disjunction or schism is opening up between the economic and the political aims of globalisation. Theorisations of the disarticulation between the economic, technological and political aims of modernity are a key focus of debates on postmodernity. Habermas for instance argues that the radical disjuncture between economic and political effects of a globalised economy entails what he calls a paradoxical 'democratic deficit' whereby at the very point in time that we are most economically integrated, we are experiencing a creeping disen-titlement; a rolling back of the welfare state. To him, the social costs or contradictions of capitalism were previously kept within tolerable limits by regulatory state entities, which would attempt to keep a balance between the need to maintain economic growth and the need to guarantee social integration and basic social security. However, the

structural transformation of the global economy escapes control of a regulatory state, and the crisis tendencies of capitalism previously counteracted by welfare states are breaking into view. In his words, 'this transformation so radically reduced nation states' capacity for action that the options remaining open to them are not sufficient to shield the populations from the undesired social and political consequences of a transnational economy' (Habermas, 2001: 50). Although others argue that this broad statement perhaps requires a more in-depth cross-cultural comparison of state policies (Kirby, 2004: 63), the coincidence of high economic growth and an increase in social inequality in the Irish context would seem to indicate that this is indeed the case.

Although as noted above there are a variety of contradictory and complex discourses on the Celtic Tiger, it appears that the hegemonic discourse of Irish modernity is driven by a neoliberal rather than a 'reflexive modernisation' imperative. Although social policy analysts have pointed out that the Irish welfare state was never particularly strong, it would appear that the opportunities produced by the Celtic Tiger economic boom could have been used to develop aspects of Irish infrastructure that would facilitate social integration such as public services (i.e. health care, transport, etc.), and to begin the process of developing a strong version of the welfare state. Ireland experienced rapid economic growth rates in the 1990s; however, it exhibited an extraordinarily low level of state spending on basic social programmes. By the late 1990s, O'Hearn demonstrates that Ireland had the lowest levels in the EU of government expenditure (36 per cent compared to Sweden's 63 per cent), and, despite the much-vaunted commitment to education, the second lowest per capita expenditure in the EU on education, only 40 per cent of the Danish level. Similarly spending on health was only half the German level and it had the fewest numbers of hospital beds in the EU (O'Hearn, 2003: 48). This systematic pursuit of neoliberal strategies such as wage restraint and social partnerships on the one hand, and tax incentives for transnational corporations on the other has not only meant that the Irish infrastructure has remained undeveloped, but also that Ireland's indigenous economy remains undeveloped and is a dependant economy. According to O'Hearn, Ireland 'has merely swapped one version of dependency for another' (O'Hearn, 2003: 48). In contrast to this discourse of reflexivity, adaptability and the potentially positive dimensions of global modernity, one could argue that the impact of neoliberal policies at the expense of social welfare

in Ireland illustrates the 'crisis tendencies' inherent in the increased marketisation of the state. Cerny for instance argues that there has been a shift from the national welfare state to the 'competition state' whereby the 'competition state has pursued increased marketisation in order to make economic activities located within the national territory, or which otherwise contribute to national wealth, more competitive in international and transnational terms' (Cerny, 2000: 122). According to Habermas (2001) these crisis tendencies are even encroaching upon the social democratic principles of Scandinavian countries.

COLLISIONS IN FAMILY LIFE: WOMEN'S LABOUR AND CHILDCARE

A particular symptom of these cultural collisions and the problematic prioritisation of the economic development over social integration is the coexistence of rapidly increasing rates of women's labour force participation without a corresponding increase in childcare accessibility. Several commentators have documented how a proportion of the Celtic Tiger economic boom can be attributed to the 'feminisation of the workforce' or women's rapid entry into the labour market, particularly young women with children (Collins and Wickham, 2001), and thus have described the Celtic Tiger as the 'Celtic Tigress' (O'Connor, 1998). Yet this boom has not prompted the development of an infrastructure that would facilitate combining work and family life. Despite the fact that a recent OECD report claimed that family-friendly policies were essential not only to promote child development and family wellbeing, but also to reduce poverty, underpin productivity and bolster employment in our ageing societies, Ireland has one of the worst records of balancing home and work life in the EU. While provisions for maternity and parental leave and child benefits have improved marginally in recent years, they lag far behind other EU states, and a recent report by the Forum on the Workplace of the Future revealed that Irish childcare costs were the highest in Europe. Irish parents pay on average 20 per cent of their annual income towards childcare, the report found – almost twice the EU average of 12 per cent (Forum on the Workplace of the Future, 2005) – and the problem is worsening.

   This rapid increase in the female labour force, whereby half of all women with children in Ireland are in the workforce (CSO, 2005), combined with the underdevelopment of public childcare facilities and the failure of public policy to keep pace with the rate of economic

change, has a variety of implications for Irish families. For instance, members of dual career and in particular single parent families with working mothers internalise the stresses of these contradictory roles, and are forced to solve childcare dilemmas in a piecemeal and ad hoc fashion (relying on temporary arrangements with parents, neighbours and friends, or by taking 'sick days'). This situation is further exacerbated by the fact that research shows that in Ireland, as elsewhere, women assume the dominant proportion of responsibility for domestic labour whether or not they are in the workforce (O'Connor, 1998: 122) and earn on average 80 per cent of what men earn, and therefore work what Armstrong and Armstrong (1994) call 'the double day'. International literature suggests that women who work a double day could be more at risk of psychological distress and, in particular, stress, depression and alcoholism (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1994). As well, recent literature indicates that the lack of state provision for the elderly means that increasingly families will become members of what is being called 'the sandwich generation': trying to balance work and childcare while caring for ailing elderly parents. The tensions and contradictions that working women and men with children experience in attempting to reconcile competing demands are microcosmic representations of the 'crisis tendencies' within globalised capitalist societies.

Recent transformations in Irish society have produced a number of competing, contradictory and colliding gender discourses with specific reference to the increasingly incompatible and multiple roles assigned to women in the wake of the Celtic Tiger. Paradoxically, Ireland's economic boom is fuelled by women's labour at the same time as it benefits (albeit only in the short term) from so-called 'traditional' structures and ideologies that designate childcare as a woman's responsibility. On a cultural level this ideology is a residual effect of the image of the 'self- sacrificing Mother' inherent in Catholic and nationalist discourses (Nash, 1997). However, the relegation of care work to the private sphere clearly meets the needs of capital, for the invisible, unpaid status of caring labour is clearly a factor in the feminisation of poverty, and the increased risk of poverty amongst single parents and older women, and reveals the state's failure to support economically such labour.

Ireland has consistently held an ambivalent position towards families. Despite the fact that traditionally married women and mothers were denied access to the labour market, a variety of factors including the economic boom, rising housing prices and smaller

families, as well as the rise of feminist thought equating work with emancipation, have facilitated the rapid entry of women into the workforce; however, childcare facilities are underdeveloped, there is no tax relief on childcare, and Irish families spend a higher proportion of their earnings on childcare than their European counterparts. In this context, one could argue that the issue of childcare in Ireland needs to be formulated within a framework of basic citizenship rights. Taylor-Gooby for instance demonstrates how the false dichotomy between public and private labour and the association of caring labour with the private, informal sphere has the effect of denying basic rights of social citizenship to carers. She argues that 'in conservative/corporate regimes, care work falls on women in the informal sector and "is outside the realm of welfare citizenship"' (Taylor-Gooby, 1991: 97).

Moreover, the inadequacies of state provision for childcare in the context of the feminisation of the labour force are illustrated by a more general contradiction or cultural collision between the official endorsement of the breadwinner model of 'the Irish family' (a model which many Irish feminists claim accords a 'passive, private, and domestic role for women' and locates the 'proper' place of women exclusively within the home), and the diverse, lived realities of contemporary Irish families in the context of the entry of more women into the labour force and the increasing diversity of family forms. The particular, hegemonic definition of 'the family' enshrined in the Constitution and which forms the basis for social policy presumes the dominance of a particular, two-parent, heterosexual single residential patriarchal family form (which Eichler (1988) calls the 'monolithic model' of the family) with a particular gendered split between domestic, private labour and paid, public labour. This is distinctly at odds with the lived experience of the majority of families and excludes and penalises the many diverse family forms not adhering to this model. Irish families are becoming increasingly diverse: from 1996 to 2002 the number of divorces has tripled, the number of cohabiting couples has increased, there has been an increase of 'blended families', and there has been a 20 per cent increase in lone parent households. As a result of the discrepancy between the monolithic, breadwinner model enshrined in family policy in Ireland, and the lived reality of family life, families not adhering to this monolithic model experience a variety of inequalities: a higher risk of poverty amongst lone parents, lesser legal and financial safeguards for cohabitees and their children, a lack of recognition of same-sex couples and their children, and an increased risk of poverty amongst

older women (Women's Health Council, 2004: 5). Working-class and single parent families face prohibitive childcare costs which are strong disincentives to workforce participation, factors that reinforce women's economic vulnerability and the possibility of being trapped in a 'cycle of poverty', and that facilitate the feminisation of poverty in Ireland.

While there are, of course, many factors that have led to these contradictions, they must also be linked with the fact that on a global scale, the historical tendency for the Irish government to prioritise economic growth over social integration would indicate that things are not likely to change in the immediate future. Such contradictions are consistent with what commentators within Ireland are calling the uneven development of Irish modernity and the prioritisation of economic modernisation over social integration. For instance, Gibbons (1988) has argued that public authorities in Ireland in the 1960s promoted industrial development but had no commitment to social, political or cultural modernisation. O'Mahony and Delanty (1998) argue that Ireland experienced a gap in the twentieth century between economic modernity and cultural traditionalism. They contend that the Irish nation is identified with a particular, singular culture and history, which forms the basis for the collective identity, an identity that is exclusionary to other plural, diverse 'identities' which are then excluded and even rejected.

One strategy to contest the tyranny of the monoculturalist versions of the family has been an attempt to redefine the Irish Constitution in a manner that recognises the multiplicity of familial and gendered lives in Ireland. The Women's Health Council of Ireland and the National Women's Council of Ireland have both proposed amendments to the Irish Constitution, which they argue must be revised to encompass a diversity of family forms rather than a singular, monolithic model in order to eliminate policy outcomes which are clearly discriminatory to those not adhering to this particular family form. This document is based on the premise that the narrow constitutional definition of 'the family' creates a hierarchy of families, and suggests amendments that are inclusive of a diversity of family types – including for instance cohabitees, same-sex couples, single parents, dual career families, families with a caregiver in the home – and that acknowledge what a family does as opposed to a reified, homogenised view of what it is (Lynch, 1996). They argue that constitutional change is a key element to provoking change at the level of legislation, since 'the State, and especially the Supreme Court, have so far refused to read

the Constitution (in a historically sensitive manner), in relation to the articles on the Family, and continue to understand its provisions in a literal fashion' (Women's Health Council, 2004: 4).

It is not clear, however, whether or not such changes will be implemented or if their implementation would affect long-standing gendered structures and ideologies within Ireland. In recent years, debates have shifted to a more global focus that draws attention to how citizenship involves racial as well as gendered hierarchies. There is evidence that some dual income families in Ireland have dealt with these contradictory demands by availing of migrant female labour to meet their domestic needs. For instance, Kennedy argues that the childcare crisis in Irish society has produced an employment scenario which has encouraged the migration of women from poor countries to work as domestic labourers, but who often find they are without recourse to adequate social, civil and political rights, and many of whom are forced to leave their own children behind. Kennedy suggests that 'as more Irish women and in particular mothers have entered the paid labour market, they have been replaced in their traditional roles by non-national women, sometimes here illegally, in the most extreme cases as a result of trafficking' (Kennedy, 2004: 93–4). As Williams puts it, 'many carers worldwide are migrant women and there is a chain of care stretching from the less developed nations to the industrialized countries' (Daly and Standing, 2001: 5). This is a particular example of what Ehrenreich and Hochschild (2003) are calling the globalisation of women's work, most apparent in the traditional work of women in caring, cleaning and prostitution (Kennedy, 2004: 93), and the transposition of domestic responsibilities onto a racialised underclass.

The validity of the discourse of rights and the usefulness of concepts of citizenship is a topic that is highly debated by feminists, for there is a long-standing debate with regards to how much existing understandings of citizenship can acknowledge women's lived experience. The discourse of citizenship has been strongly contested for subscribing to an individualist ethos of rights and responsibilities, and thus for reflecting a particular western and masculine subject which is understood as the 'universal' subject. Pateman (1988), Lister (1997), Mouffe (1991) and others argue that this version of rational, autonomous and highly individuated subjectivity central to 'rights' discourse does not match the experience of many women's roles within the family and also prioritises a particular ethnocentric view of the citizen, despite its claims to universality. However, the contradic-

tions and crisis tendencies outlined above perhaps illustrate that now more than ever we need to reformulate versions of citizenship in ways that overcome long-standing dichotomies between gender-neutral and gender-differentiated citizenship, the equality vs. difference debate, the ethic of justice vs. the ethics of care, and independence vs. interdependence (Lister, 1997). It is more important than ever before to facilitate gendered and racialised notions of citizenship, for as Mishra argues, globalisation entails the 'erosion of social citizenship, the retreat from universality and the public sphere, the strengthening of the hand of capital as against labour, and the dropping of the redistribution as an objective of the welfare state' (1999: 29).

The negative social effects of the economic boom in Ireland validate this general thesis that globalisation prioritises the values of economic growth over social integration. For instance, despite rising levels of economic growth, there is an increasing level of social inequality, and despite the recent and rapid increase in female labour force participation, there has not been a corresponding improvement in childcare. These two examples highlight the need for a more socially responsible formulation of the welfare state and a more race-sensitive construction of citizenship, and illustrate how the role conflicts and contradictory expectations placed on women in Irish society are a microcosmic example of the contradictions and 'crises tendencies' inherent in globalised capitalism. Feminists have long been engaged in such struggles for childcare in Ireland; however, there is evidence that the feminist movement in Ireland is becoming frustrated with how little has changed (O'Connor, 1998). Perhaps at this juncture the way forward is what Irish feminists challenging the Constitution are currently doing, that is, constructing transnational solidarities with feminists who are similarly challenging constitutional rights of women and formulating more inclusive versions of citizenship. For instance, the Global Women's Strike (GWS) – a network with national coordinations in eleven countries, including Ireland – was formed to urge the economic and social recognition of unwaged caring work. As well, the Irish Human Rights Commission recently submitted recommendations for changes to the Constitution to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. These are but a few examples of transnational cooperation with regards to the issue of formal citizenship rights of women. And while many feminists have illustrated how the conferring of legal rights does not necessarily immediately or directly affect the informal status of women, it is a place to start.

TOWARDS A 'ROOTED COSMOPOLITANISM' AS A UTOPIAN IDEAL

At a cultural level, what is also needed in Ireland to overcome hegemonic and monoculturalist versions of family, ethnicity and temporality is a strong version of cosmopolitanism which, in the words of David Held (2004), denotes attempts to establish a moral and political outlook that is potentially capable of 'taming globalisation'. Formulations of cosmopolitanism take account of the limits of the nation state adequately to provide a framework for global governance and collective solidarity in a context where globalisation has irrevocably transformed political, economic and cultural life. Attempts to formulate economic cosmopolitanism have been focused around the issue of how to regulate global markets in a context where the radical excesses of the global economy escape the control of a regulatory state. Political cosmopolitanism is driven by the need to maintain social standards and involves attempts to democratise decision making structures at a variety of levels, including macro-level debates on how to implement more responsible supranational regulatory structures (such as a reformed General Assembly of the United Nations), and micro-level debates on local democracy which look, for instance, to the Zapatista revolt as a micro-level example of political cosmopolitanism. Cultural cosmopolitanism is the consolidation of political identities based on a sense of principles of universality rather than purely based on particularity, and involves the hermeneutic move of being able to 'take the role of the other'.

The 'internal colonisation' and the new exclusions produced in Irish society highlight the need for a new, strong, more utopian 'cosmopolitics' in Irish society that could transcend the narrow economism of Irish state policy and the weak multiculturalism of Irish cultural politics. Current formulations of cosmopolitanism are not without their problems, however, for many commentators have shown how both theories of cosmopolitanism and theories of multiculturalism are often based on individualistic and social ontologies and are proposed within a narrow framework that presumes a culture of privilege. Calhoun (2003), for instance, argues that the unself-reflexive celebration of mobility and nomadicism apparent in many conceptions of cosmopolitanism presumes entitlement to an elite social and occupational status and to various material and bureaucratic privileges, privileges not available to the majority of world citizens (i.e. access to good passports, easy visas, credit cards, airline clubs, etc). As well, he argues many theories of cosmopolitan-

ism discriminate against the local and contain an elitist conception of identity as choice, excluding involuntarily localised or racialised individuals whose identities are ascribed or imposed identities, and who are perhaps most in need of a strong cosmopolitics.

This notion of cosmopolitanism is very utopian, and is aspirational rather than an inevitability of history. The notion of cultural cosmopolitanism is particularly precarious, since it is distinctly at odds with deeply held national, ethnic and religious traditions, evidenced by the rise of new fundamentalisms in America and elsewhere. Cultural cosmopolitanism involves the detaching or disembedding of identities from particular times, places and traditions, and involves principles of unfixity, hybridity and impurity. To Habermas, for instance, cosmopolitanism involves a 'politics of recognition' whereby the 'identity of each individual citizen is woven together with collective identities, and must be stabilised in a network of mutual recognition' (Habermas, 2001: 74). In so far as it celebrates nomadicism and hybridity, some versions of cosmopolitanism have been critiqued for their cultural imperialism, for the tendency to represent falsely the particular standpoint of an elite and mobile social status as the universal standpoint which overlooks the material privileges not available to the majority of world citizens (passports, visas, etc.). Nonetheless, it is clear that we need points of identification and solidarity at a postnational level both to tame globalisation and to find a framework for global solidarity beyond what we have now. Perhaps we need to view cosmopolitanism as a kind of provisional, temporary ideal, as a concept which 'views the common good as a "vanishing point", as something to which we must constantly refer when we are acting as citizens, but which can never be reached' (Mouffe, 1991: 379). The cultivation of a cosmopolitan imaginary can perhaps operate as a basis of solidarity with other groups contesting various aspects of neoliberal globalisation through what Laclau calls 'hegemonic articulatory practices' (Mouffe, 2000: 147) with various anti-globalisation movements, for perhaps such broader coalitions are necessary to guide a new political imaginary and to contest the prioritisation of economic growth over social solidarity that is part of the so-called 'New World Order'.

Luke Gibbons (2002), following Appiah (2006), argues that we need a 'rooted cosmopolitanism', or a cosmopolitanism but one which is rooted in, rather than in denial of, the experience that at least for some involved poverty and deprivation, for it is only in coming to terms with the past that one is able to empathise with the Other.

Moreover, such a 'rooted cosmopolitanism' in Irish society would acknowledge the extent to which, though the 'Irish' can perhaps be said to be 'rooted' in a largely shared experience of the past, in contemporary Ireland we increasingly occupy multiple subject positions, and a variety of temporalities simultaneously, for these categories themselves are overlapping, multivarious and uneven. As a decolonising nation that is simultaneously being recolonised (and colonising others) by global capital, Ireland is a clear example of what Bhabha means by the hybrid, ambiguous status of the 'in-between'. Similarly, this very experience of the multiple modernities (and traditions) that we are experiencing in Ireland (and which are at times in collision), gives us a sense of 'in-betweenness' in terms of time, a sense of being 'time travellers', of moving in and out of multiple and overlapping temporalities. As Bhabha says, 'our existence today is marked by a tenebrous sense of survival, living on the borderlines of the "present", for which there seems to be no proper name, other than the current and controversial shiftiness of the prefix "post"' (Bhabha, 1994: 3). In this creative space of 'in-betweenness' there is the potential to develop a sense of double (or multiple) vision, for it is often in the liminal spaces at interstices or borders where the 'overlap and displacement of domains of difference ... that the intersubjective and collective experiences of nationness, community interest, or cultural value are negotiated' (Bhabha, 1994: 3). In Bhabha's work liminality itself signifies the 'realm of the beyond', and this 'in-between space'/time, these borders or thresholds, can potentially cut across divisions or dichotomies of the past. Perhaps a grounded cosmopolitanism that acknowledges the dualistic psychological legacy of past systems of colonial domination (and the need to work through this collective psychopathological symptom) but that accepts the 'in-betweenness' of the present would be the best model with which we could ground a cosmopolitanism that could facilitate postnational solidarities with other casualties of the world system.

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2
Politics: Continuity and Change in Irish Political Culture

Orienting Questions

- What are the characteristics of politics in an age of globalisation?
- What is the relationship between business and politics?
- Is contemporary political culture reflexive and auto-correcting?
- Does the reflexive modernisation of political institutions eliminate corruption?
- How are aspects of traditional political culture reproduced in contemporary contexts?

Political culture in Ireland is now dominated by tribunals, public inquiries and similar institutions, which have emerged in part from the globalisation and modernisation of political institutions characteristic of information-rich and communicatively fluent societies. This notion of political institutions as self-correcting, self-reflexive structures guided by a communicative rationality has paralleled the accelerated modernisation of globalisation. Through an examination of the ongoing Tribunal of Inquiry into Payments to Politicians in Ireland, this chapter will reveal how tribunals show the transformation of Irish political culture through 'reflexive modernisation' and, simultaneously, the recurrence of traditional forms and practices as adaptations to the contingencies of globalisation.

RECURRENCE OF THE LEPRECHAUN
IN THE MYTHIC AGE OF GLOBALISATION

The absence of myth is also a myth; the oldest, the purest, the only true myth. (Bataille, 1994: 48)

The United States of America and the United States of Europe represent different civilisational models of globalisation: the former, free market neoliberalism, the latter more committed to values of institutionalised collective mutual responsibility. Contemporary Ireland, arguably the most globalised society in the world at present,[1]

is a 'beneficiary' of both these models. Ireland's accelerated modernisation and its ambivalent effects – the growth of both affluence and inequality, individuation and social dis-integration, secularisation and anomie – is fed in more or less equal measure by foreign direct investment by American global corporations, and by agricultural subsidy and development grant aid from the European Union. The success of Irish globalisation has to an extent been an accident of history and geography, but it is equally due to Irish governments' strategic courting of both the United States and the European Union simultaneously, seeking to have 'the best of both worlds'.

Globalisation has been accompanied by convulsions in Ireland's political culture. A succession of tribunals of inquiry has been investigating the practices of corrupt businessmen-politicians and public servants during the formative period of Ireland's 'economic miracle', when Ireland was transformed from moribund stasis and underdevelopment into the so-called Celtic Tiger, the highest growth economy in the OECD.[2] Ireland is ranked 23rd of 91 countries on the Corruption Perceptions Index (2003: 3), worse than the Netherlands, Denmark and the United Kingdom, for example, but better than Greece and Italy. The Council of Europe (GRECO, 2001: 14–15) instances 'donations' to politicians, tax evasion, bribery by developers and land speculators to influence planning decisions. The corruption is relatively minor by international comparison. The sums are relatively small and the stakes are low, but corruption, though venial, is pervasive, encompassing the Prime Minister's and Ministerial Offices, members of parliament, local councillors and minor political functionaries, to the root and branch and to the capillary functions of power. A recent Rowntree report concludes, 'Corruption is a central theme of Irish life and politics. Ireland is now regarded as one of the more corrupt European Union countries' (Harvey, 2002).

To enable us to conceptualise Ireland's corrupt political culture in terms of its being betwixt and between American and European globalisations, we will introduce two key metaphors, ideas with origins and currency that in some important ways 'cancel the opposition' between Boston and Berlin, and yet 'preserve the difference' between them. The first is 'metempsychosis', meaning the transmigration of souls, or reincarnation, a fundamental structuring principle of James Joyce's work.[3] The second is Trickster, a mythic figure who comes to the fore in contexts of chaos, liminality and moral ambivalence, as a

figure who trades, deals and exchanges between supernatural forces and the realm of the mundane.

Understanding Ireland's political culture entails seeing how the spirits of the past, particularly the spirit of the Trickster, metempsychotically recurs in the present mythic age of globalisation. Specifically, we will formulate the ongoing Tribunals of Inquiry into Payments to Politicians as a contemporary expression of the desire to catch Leprechauns. The Leprechaun is a particular idiomatic representation of a highly generalised cultural archetype found in most of the world's mythologies – Oriental, Middle-Eastern, Judaeo-Christian, Greco-Roman, Scandinavian, Native American, Australian Aboriginal, Anglo-Saxon and Celtic. Like all Tricksters the Leprechaun's access to powers of the supernatural realm enables him to influence events in the mundane, just as the Trickster politician, as broker to his clients, specialises in deals and exchanges between centres of power, circles of influence and local theatres of action.

Like other Trickster figures the Leprechaun has a secret treasure. He may reveal the whereabouts of his treasure if he is captured and questioned. A Leprechaun can be trapped by an unbroken stare, from which he usually escapes, by trickery. The tribunals are a contemporary recurrence of this traditional form. The tribunals grasp the Leprechaun and hold him tightly. The Leprechaun politician is subjected to the baleful gaze and the strenuous questioning of lawyers and judges. The Leprechaun squirms and wriggles, struggles to get free. He procrastinates, prevaricates, evades the questions, he raises red herrings. He uses every trick in the book to avoid giving answers. He pleads ignorance, forgetfulness. He protests his innocence. He suggests that while he knows nothing at all himself, he has heard that someone else, someone not yet before the tribunal, may know the secret. Even when he seems to have been successfully apprehended and reveals his riches to his captor, it turns out to be a trick. The Leprechaun hunter is fooled, and is left as poor or poorer than before. Meanwhile the Leprechaun vanishes for the time being, emerging again someplace else. The tribunals are an institutionalised form of the concentrated gaze of legal-rational authority, one of the primary processes of modern systematic disenchantment of the world. As such, tribunals seek the eradication of Trickster Leprechauns from political culture through a rational process of reflexive modernisation, thereby relegitimating and shoring up the motivational underpinnings of the core institutions of governance and democracy. However,

the Leprechaun is up to his old tricks, and at the very heart of this modern institution he tries to turn the tables on his captors.

JOYCE: METEMPSYCHOSIS AND HISTORICAL *RICORSO*

Metempsychosis is the ancient Greek idea of the transmigration of souls, by which is meant that the soul, the sublime substance that transcends the material individual body, is an individual portion of a larger collective spirit. The individual soul is the *phenomena*, a manifestation of universal *noumena*. The spirit can move between, enter into, take possession of and animate different bodies, and thus the material substance of the body, its consciousness and its actions can be transformed and transmogrified in accordance with the spirit that animates it. In the Judaeo-Christian tradition the Holy Spirit is that aspect of the Divine Trinity that is portioned out to each individual. The Holy Spirit can transform a person so that one partakes of everlasting life, and conversely, one can be possessed by Evil. In the more familiar idiom of modern philosophy and history, this is articulated in terms of the ways in which the *Zeitgeist* – the general spirit of the times manifests itself in the minds, actions and characters of particular individuals.

Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) is structured on the Vichian principle of *ricorso:* that history unfolds as cycles that are always the same, though not identical – the *content* changes, but the *form* recurs.[4] The voyage of Ulysses in Homer's epic is relived in the mundane everyday world of his modern hero Leopold Bloom. In Yeats, metempsychosis is represented by the figure of the spiral gyre, recurring cycles of history marked by the dissolution of order, chaos and liminality, followed by rebirth. In 'The Second Coming' (1919) metempsychosis is explicitly tied to the experience of modernisation and modernity. The twentieth century is the apotheosis of cycles of historical recurrence:

> Turning and turning in the widening gyre
> The falcon cannot hear the falconer.
> Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
> Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world …

The 'rough beast' of the second coming is associated with 'laughing, ecstatic destruction' as Yeats himself elaborated. This modern, global twentieth-century dissolution, liminality and metempsy-chotic recurrence is accompanied by a moral and political culture in which

> The best lack all conviction, while the worst
> Are full of passionate intensity.[5]

Metempsychosis for Joyce and Yeats is not simply a literary or stylistic device, but represents a philosophy of history. Metempsychosis thus enables us to see modernisation not only as the 'disenchantment of the world' (Weber, 1976) but simultaneously as re-enchantment: the spirits that animated the past live on in the present, albeit in new guises. This is a radical insight Joyce shares with his contemporary, Walter Benjamin (1999f: 26). In Benjamin's philosophy of history the disenchantment of the world (Weber, 1976) is not so much 'the destruction of myth' (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1992: 3) as its reconstitution. For Benjamin, capitalism, and now globalisation – in so far as globalisation can be interpreted as meaning 'the triumph of capitalism' and the hegemony of neoliberalism on a world scale – are to be understood as a reconfiguration of the archaic and an intensification of myth. Modernity is a new mythic world – a collective dream state, a fairytale world, a phantasmagoria of consumption sustained by the myth of progress. Globalisation is a further permutation of a mythic constellation, and the notion of reflexive modernisation as auto-correcting sustains the myth of progress. Reflexive modernisation may be a further convolute in the moebus interior of the collective dream: we dream that we capture and eliminate the Trickster, we dream that we have awakened, but as a means of facilitating our remaining sleeping. The mythic figure of Trickster is what Benjamin would call a *dinkbilder* (a thought image) that illuminates an aspect of the mythic world of globalisation, reveals that world as chaotic, arbitrary and corrupt, but seeks to redeem the creativity and cunning that animate its actors, as it is these capacities, appearing here in the distorted and pathological forms of political corruption, that are the repositories of utopian energies that must be redeemed and put to better work, lest the alternative become the fully disenchanted instrumental rational iron cage of mechanised petrification.

TRICKSTER AND THE POLITICAL UNCONSCIOUS

Carl Jung says that Trickster is 'a "*psychologem*", an archetypical psychic structure of extreme antiquity. In his clearest manifestations he is a faithful copy of an absolutely undifferentiated human consciousness, corresponding to a psyche that has hardly left the animal

level' (Jung, in Radin, 1972: 200). Although Trickster belongs to the primordial past of social evolution and the emergence of culture, Jung says, he continues to make his influence felt on the highest level of civilisation. Trickster is the metaphorical figure in which elemental struggles of Eros and Thanatos (creative and destructive instincts) reason and passion, id and superego, civilised man and sub-human brute are still played out and unresolved. Trickster is 'the mythic embodiment of ambiguity and ambivalence, doubleness and duplicity, contradiction and paradox' (Hyde, 1998: 7). Modernity, if it is characterised by rationalisation and the disenchantment of the world (Weber, 1976) should put an end to Trickster and other mythic creatures, but it does not see the end of him at all. Modernity is characterised by ontological uncertainty and existential insecurity (Berman, 1985), ambivalence and moral ambiguity (Bauman, 1990). The condition of liminality identified by Turner (1967) in pre-industrial societies is not eliminated by modernisation. On the contrary, in a recent reformulation of Turner's work, Szakolczai argues that modernity can be understood as the institutionalisation of a paradoxical condition of 'permanent liminality' (1999: 215). Insofar as modernity is defined by the forces of the free market, moral anomie and existential rootlessness, far from being eliminated by modernisation, Trickster in fact reappears as a central protagonist and, Jung suggests, becomes manifest primarily in the domain of politics. The spirit of Trickster metempsychotically animates modern political culture in general. Not all political actors in the mythic age of globalisation are necessarily Tricksters, but his is the ruling spirit of political life.

To translate the usage of Radin's anthropology, Hyde's mythology and Jung's psychoanalysis into the register of sociology, Trickster is what Durkheim would call a collective representation. Trickster is an idea, distilled and condensed into an image, expressing the collective wisdom of 'a multitude of different minds that have associated, intermixed, and combined their ideas and feelings and long generations have accumulated their experience and knowledge' (Durkheim, 1995: 15). Particular representations are necessarily partial, derivative and approximate. The Irish Leprechaun is such a particular representation of the more generalised collective representation that is Trickster.

Trickster is a boundary crosser. He often appears as a thief: 'one who steals from the gods the good things that humans need if they are to survive in the world' (Hyde, 1998: 6). In Greek mythology there

are several Trickster figures, most notably Hermes and Prometheus. Prometheus stole fire and gave it to humans, elevating them from animal existence. But his wonderful gift is both precarious – needing constant attention – and potentially destructive. Hermes was cunning, ingenious, creative, deceptive: God of commerce, God of travel, God of the spoken word, especially sophistry and lying, God of invention and magic. Hermes the Messenger mediated and communicated between the mortal world, the Gods of Olympus, and the underworld of Hades. Typically, however, as Jung suggests, Trickster is not a clearly identified individual figure, but persists as a trace, an aspect, a shadow of the Gods. In Greek mythology Gods are always ambiguous. They can be capricious, equivocal, ambivalent, playful and malicious. They are prone to human weaknesses and impulses, such as lust, envy, anger and cruelty.

Trickster embodies life forces that are ungoverned and ungovernable. He has unquenchable appetites, drives and desires, excesses of human nature that are prohibited by civilisation. These are things that are necessarily denied to ordinary mortals, but which we still recognise as the base qualities of universal humanity, and which we vicariously find admirable in the lives and deeds of others, people who are 'above the ordinary', demigods and *Ubermenschen*. We vicariously enjoy the extraordinary lifestyles and quasi-legendary exploits of powerful Trickster politicians. Trickster's apparent faults – a President's lechery, or gluttony, or sloth (Bill Clinton's priapism; George 'dubya' Bush's reputation as a party animal, class-clown and dunce) – are the basis on which ordinary people recognise the ordinary (i.e. themselves) in the leader, so that the politician, even if he is the scion of a family dynasty, can appear to be humane and down to earth. And more than this: the same quality that makes him ordinary makes him extraordinary – he becomes 'everyman', 'universal man'. For this reason, Nietzsche ironically suggests, the characteristic problem of modern politics is that people repeatedly misrecognise 'mediocre man' for 'ultimate man' and prefer him to *Ubermensch* (Nietzsche, 1986: 45, 5).

In uncertain, liminal and ambivalent contexts such as those thrown up in the contemporary mythic world of globalisation, the figure of the Trickster politician resonates with the Trickster archetype in the collective unconscious. He can find sympathy with the masses, stir up fear, anxiety or enthusiasm. People can identify with him as a familiar figure, one who is like themselves (as he represents an aspect of the collective unconscious) and at the same time he appears as an

extraordinary individual, a charismatic figure, who is perceived to be the embodiment and the bearer of 'an assimilative and unifying spiritual power' (Horvath, 1997: 18). Trickster, Radin says, is 'at all times constrained to behave as he does from impulses over which he has no control' (Radin, 1972: xxiii) just as the politician is subject to unpredictable events and the contingencies of history. 'He knows neither good nor evil yet is responsible for both. He possesses no values, moral or social, is at the mercy of his passions and appetites, yet through his actions all values come into being' (Radin, 1972: xxiii). Trickster's 'seemingly asocial actions continue to keep our world lively and give it the flexibility to endure' (Hyde, 1998: 9). Similarly, the Trickster politician typically doesn't lead, but rather is himself led by the anxieties and enthusiasms, the desires and fears of the public he purportedly represents. England's Trickster Prime Minister claims to 'listen' to the anxieties and aspirations of ordinary people. He dwells in an ambiguous ethereal zone – the realm of the media – that both encompasses and separates the real world and the powers that be. From here he mediates, between the United States and the European Union; between his constituencies and the seats of the Gods in the International Monetary Fund, the World Economic Forum and the Pentagon. Hermes's winged sandals enable him to range over the whole world, where he negotiates treaties, promotes commerce and the rights of safe passage and free trade. He is the Trickster God of cosmopolitanism and globalisation (Graves, 1960, vol. 1: 65).

The Leprechaun is an Irish idiomatic trace representation of Trickster. The Leprechaun is a palimpsest of Trickster figures from diverse sources and successive historical influences: pre-Christian and Christian, Norse and Anglo-Norman, Nativist and Anglo-Irish romantic, and indeed the global-American culture industry.[6] Thus the Leprechaun bears 'family resemblances' to Cornish Pixies and Welsh Brownies and similar vestigial figures of English folklore, as well as to gnomes, dwarves, hob-goblins and household familiars that populate continental European folklore more generally. The Leprechaun is a 'first cousin' of 'Robin Goodfellow' the mole, representative of underground life, a subversive influence that Marx appropriated as a metaphor for revolution; of Shakespeare's Puck, the mischievous sprite who plays both a disruptive and assimilative role in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; a variant of whom is the Irish *Púca*, a cloven-hoofed gentleman resembling Goethe's Mephistopheles; etymologically related to *Puc*, a male mountain goat elected 'King

Puck' in a carnival tradition surviving in County Kerry; a distant descendant of horned, goat-shanked Satyrs, wild men from the mountains whose Dionysian energies the Greeks recognised as a Godly quality in all humanity – Pan.

The Leprechaun, like most Trickster figures, specialises in making deals and conducting exchanges between realms. His access to powers of the supernatural realm enables him to influence events in the mundane, just as the Trickster politician, as broker to his clients, specialises in deals and exchanges between centres of power, circles of influence and local theatres of action. O'Carroll (1987) has analysed the idiomatic content of the system of clientelism and brokerage in Irish political culture in terms of a politico-libidinal economy wherein 'strokes' (favours/tricks) are performed by 'cute hoors' (wily politicians) who receive legitimation from 'sneaking regarders' (admiring punters). Ambivalence towards the Trickster is the basis of the 'sneaking regard' that Irish people typically have towards the Leprechaun politician. We profess to despise his duplicity and chicanery, and at the same time we admire his trickery, his 'cuteness', the extraordinary power that enables him to 'pull strokes'. Even as former Prime Minister Charles J. Haughey was grilled by the tribunals, throughout his protracted 'trial by the media', in which the details of his avarice, his extravagance, his vanity, his ruthlessness, his treachery, were systematically revealed and laid out spectacularly for public view, as much as he was reviled there was equally an undercurrent flowing in the opposite direction in which he was revered as a 'lovable old rogue'.[7] Even as we reject and repudiate Trickster as an abject embodiment of qualities that we hate and fear and seek to eliminate and set behind us (as a form of cultural excrement) we simultaneously recognise embodiments of our own most essential and fundamental qualities that we continue to love.

The tribunals seek to catch Trickster Leprechauns and force them to reveal the whereabouts of their treasure. The treasure is always just out of sight – the crock of gold at the end of the rainbow. But the end of the rainbow is an optical illusion, always some further distance away, a vanishing point. Often in folklore, the Leprechaun's crock of gold is buried under a *buachallán buí*, the ragwort, a common flowering weed. The Leprechaun eventually tells his captor to go out in his field at dawn and dig for gold under the tall *buachallán*. But when one comes to dig for it, there are thousands of ragworts! The treasure is everywhere, and therefore it is nowhere in particular.[8] Our desire to get our hands on the gold is unfocused, undisciplined,

and discharges itself prematurely. And a further twist: the perception that the 'treasure is everywhere' – i.e. the discovery by the tribunals that corruption is widespread – is itself corrupting, as it now appears that corruption is so widespread and diffuse as to be in fact normal; therefore corruption is nowhere. We expend our own resources (time, energy) to extract the Trickster's secret treasure, only to find that what we get in return is substantially less than our expenditure in finding it. Meanwhile, the Leprechaun vanishes, slips away unseen, shapeshifts, only to reappear somewhere else, animating another body, tricking us again.

The McCracken Tribunal revealed the existence of a 'golden circle' of wealthy individuals with offshore bank accounts in the Ansbacher Bank in the Cayman Islands. In Celtic mythology there exists an invisible fairy realm inhabited by otherworldly beings, the *Sidhe*. Members of the so-called 'golden circle' are represented as being like the *Sidhe*. The Ansbacher account holders are 'not of this world'. They are 'bogus non-residents'. They are extra-territorial; they exist in liminal, in-between worlds of ordinary mortals and supernatural beings, in mysterious havens – the Isle of Man, Grand Cayman, an offshore *Tir na nOg*[9] of eternal youth and beauty. This corresponds to Bauman's (2000) analysis of the emergence of a new elite in the context of globalisation, an elite resembling a reincarnation of the absentee landlords of a previous era, whose wealth and power are not subject to the spatial-temporal regulatory mechanisms of national boundaries and tax regimes.

The subsequent Moriarty Tribunal extended the McCracken Inquiry to determine whether decisions made by Charles Haughey while Prime Minister were influenced by 'gifts' he received from wealthy businessmen. Charles Haughey, the consummate Trickster, had even defrauded his own 'right-hand man', Brian Lenihan. With cunning duplicity Charles Haughey appropriated for himself funds raised purportedly to pay the medical expenses of Brian Lenihan's liver transplant. As Charles Haughey and Brian Lenihan were, by all accounts, best friends, this episode echoes one of the most striking images of the Winnebago Trickster cycle, wherein Trickster's left hand attacks and wounds his right (Radin, 1972: 8).

Following up on the disclosures of the tribunals the Department of Inland Revenue has appointed a special team of tax inspectors with the necessary legal instruments to enter the fairy fort, find the hidden offshore accounts, dig out and recoup the fortune, which they estimate at €600 million. Charles Haughey eventually settled

with the Revenue Commissioners in 2003 for €5 mllion. Former MP Ray Burke has been issued a €2 million tax bill, as well as having had property seized by the Criminal Assets Bureau, and a former Dublin Assistant County Manager has received a jail sentence for corruption. So it seems that the tribunals are successful. We have caught the Leprechaun, he has divulged his secret and we have actually got our hands on the crock of gold. But the tribunals are a protracted procedure, and the legal costs are enormous. On balance, are the tribunals worth the cost and effort? Traditionally this ambiguity is at the heart of the Leprechaun folklore.

EVALUATING THE TRIBUNALS

Measured in purely monetary terms, the tribunals seem so far to have paid off. The final bill for the McCracken Tribunal came to €1.5 million, but it revealed the existence of tax evasion by offshore accounts in the Ansbacher Bank, from which the Revenue Commissioners hope to unearth some €600 million in unpaid taxes. The painstaking excavation of this fairy fort is currently underway. The subsequent Moriarty Tribunal cost €3.5 million, and Charles Haughey settled with Revenue for €5 million. The Flood Tribunal, which expands the scope of the investigation still further, has so far cost €25 million, and recouped €34.5 million in revenues due. Nevertheless, even on a purely financial balance sheet the Leprechaun's trick is evident, as the ratio between tribunal costs and revenues is steadily declining. The Flood Tribunal is expected to last for many more years, but the treasure trove of the 'golden circle' in offshore bank accounts is still an optimistic speculative guesstimate by Revenue.[10]

But the balance sheet on which the tribunals are to be evaluated is not simply a financial, quantitative measure. The more important payoff, the crock of gold, is not money, but a qualitatively different kind of treasure. The real treasure that the tribunals seek is in the form of a wealth of public trust and political legitimation. By exposing political corruption and systematically eradicating it by applying the methods of legal-rational authority to reforming the institutions of Irish political culture, the tribunals, it is hoped, will exorcise the spectre of legitimation crisis (Habermas, 1976b) that haunts the contemporary state. This spectre of legitimation crisis manifests itself in the withdrawal of trust and support for political parties and institutions and erosion of the motivational basis of democratic electoral systems resulting in low poll turnouts and

progressively increasing legitimacy and democratic deficits. This legitimation deficit is a problem faced by the Bush administration and the American political system no less than the parliamentary democracies of Europe and of Ireland.

The differences between the United States and the European Union can be exaggerated in the rhetoric of globalisation. Both the United States and the European Union, as variants of modern western liberal democracy, are facing similar problems of legitimation crisis and democratic deficit. These problems are anchored in the fundamental principles of the French and American Revolutions. Their sources include: (a) the expansion and deepening of claims to equality, due to ongoing processes of individuation and the articulation of rights and entitlements premised on such claims by social movements; (b) the inflation of expectations, in terms of standards of living, service provision and quality of life, tied to the notions of 'progress' and 'development'; and (c) the exposure of corruption and political scandal, linked to the self-reflexive imperatives of modern institutions which become increasingly transparent to the scrutiny of informed publics, amplified by the mass media's omnipresence. The Leprechaun's treasure unearthed by the tribunals could help replenish the sources of political legitimation, restoring trust in political process and the institutions of the state and thus underwriting the cost and securing the future of government and social administration. These costs are set to increase: with the ever-expanding elaboration of rights and their associated demands on taxation; with the scaling back of market intervention and subsidies such as the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy; with the expansion of the European Union and the abrogation of power from local and national representative systems to centralised technocratic elites and administrative bureaucracies concomitant with postnational, globalised governmental systems; and of course, with the bursting of the global-American high-tech stock bubble, now revealed to have been artificially overinflated by corporate and political trickery.

Tribunals, public inquiries, hearings and similar institutions, increasingly common in the political culture not just of Ireland, but in the United Kingdom, the European Union and in America, are usually seen as exemplifying the auto-correcting, self-reflexive capacity of institutions in information-rich and communicatively fluent societies (Giddens, 1990; Beck, Giddens and Lash, 1995). However, Corcoran and White (2000) argue that the tribunals have a negligible effect in terms of reflexive modernisation. Frequently – as with the case

discussed here – tribunals and public inquiries are not embedded into statutory agencies and therefore have minimal punitive, sanctioning or correctional powers. The tribunals' terms of reference explicitly rule out using information uncovered by the inquiry in criminal prosecution. Instead, these institutions spectacularise a process of deliberative democracy. They make a display, a 'show' of reasoned discourse, but they do not implement that reason to achieve self-correction. Thus the tribunals, which purportedly eliminate trickery, turn out themselves to bear the mark of Trickster. Not unlike another Trickster politician's ongoing war against ill-defined and quasi-metaphysical entities – 'terror' and 'Evil' – these events primarily serve the purpose of providing a spectacular distraction from other matters of public interest.

POLITICAL CORRUPTION: MATERIAL AND MORAL IMPOVERISHMENT

The kernel of the Leprechaun's trick is distraction. His 'devilment', his blarney and theatrical antics divert our attention from something more important going on unbeknownst to us. Focused on the Leprechaun's trickery we miss the bigger con – that our household is being emptied behind our backs; that crops are being pillaged and livestock rustled by thieving fairies and other malevolent entities. In the metempsychotic recurrence of this archaic form, while we are focused on tax evasion by corrupt local businessmen-politicians we are distracted from perceiving systematic tax evasion by global corporations. Less than a mile from Dublin Castle where the tribunals are in session stands the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC). The IFSC is an offshore bank, an enchanted castle built on a tax-free virtual island in the centre of Dublin. Through this magical portal transnational corporations repatriate their profits from manufacturing in Ireland and sales in the European Union, as well as profits made on the global stock and currency markets. Tens of billions of euro per annum are spirited away, tax free or minimally taxed.[11] Thus the collective household of the Irish state, as well as the EU, is emptied of revenue to fund social security, health, education, housing and public services, and we are all materially impoverished as a result.

And the Leprechaun's trickery leaves us not only materially impoverished but morally bankrupt as well. The person who catches the Leprechaun is always introduced initially as 'a good man', or at least as an average, 'ordinary decent man'. As soon as he has the Leprechaun in his grasp, however, a change comes over him. He

becomes focused intently on the task at hand, extracting the secret of riches from the Leprechaun. He squeezes him tightly, fixes his gaze upon him. He threatens him with captivity and imprisonment – that he will lock him in a box and not let him go unless he tells. Frequently he tortures him – holds him against the fire; sets the cat at him; threatens that he will kill him unless he gives up his purse or reveals where the crock of gold is hidden. The person who captures the Leprechaun becomes hardened, malicious and cruel. Even if the capturer extracts something from the Leprechaun, there is a trick in it. He is spiritually and morally impoverished by the transaction.

Georg Simmel identifies cynicism and the blasé outlook as characteristic psychological consequences of the expansion of the money economy. Cynicism and the blasé outlook are both 'the results of the reduction of the concrete values of life to the mediating value of money … Money's capacity to reduce the highest as well as the lowest values equally to one value form' leads to 'the disparagement of all old values' (Simmel, 1989: 255). The cynic, as Oscar Wilde says, 'knows the price of everything, but the value of nothing'. Ostensibly the tribunals aim to clean up Irish politics and public office and restore confidence in some of the core institutions of Irish public life, and no doubt this is the sincere objective of many of the presiding members of the judiciary and public servants involved. However, as the essential product of the tribunal proceedings is more and more disclosures of more and more corruption, an endless stream of content that displays variations of an identical form – the saleability to the highest bidder of the values of public service and civic duty, from the Prime Minister's office to the lowliest Councillor and party hack – only serves to further reinforce public cynicism and harden the blasé attitude. Thus, while on the one hand the tribunals may be interpreted as a manifestation of the reflexive modernisation of Irish institutions, their self-correction and relegitimation, the unintended consequences of the tribunals may turn out to be not the restoration of public confidence in the legislature, but its further erosion, and not the elimination of corruption, but our familiarisation with it to the point of its normalisation, facilitating the continuity of corruption in Irish public life as 'business as usual'. When shamed Leprechaun Taoiseach Charles Haughey was given a full honours state funeral but only a couple of thousand people showed up, political commentators interpreted it as a sign of maturity in Irish political culture – behaviour like Haughey's was no longer acceptable to the Irish public. But a year later, Haughey's protégée was exposed as having accepted a number

of personal loans from friends, of receiving donations at a private function while Minister for Finance, and of being the beneficiary of a preferential price for his private dwelling. Any one of these incidents would have been grounds for resignation in most other western democracies, but in Ireland? The 'Leprechaun in the anorak', once caught, initially denied everything, then prevaricated, then admitted to everything. And the electorate, apparently inured to so much petty corruption, said 'well, fair enough so, sure carry on!'

The foremost danger facing modern democracy, both American and European, is represented by Weber, Adorno and Habermas as domination by instrumental rationality, the systematic dehumanisation of government by bureaucratic and/or narrowly economistic logics. Against this, Weber (1976) invested some hope in charismatic leadership. In the aftermath of the role of charisma in European totalitarianism and the devolution of American democracy into mass society and culture industry described by Adorno and Horkheimer (1992), Habermas (1987) holds out the possibility of countering the colonisation of the lifeworld by fostering the institutionalisation of communicative rationality. His model is explicitly one of a quasi-legal form of truth-seeking and a normatively binding ideal speech situation, a situation approximated by the tribunals. But the reflexive modernisation approximated by the tribunals is directed in this case not against the colonisation of the lifeworld by systems, but, on the contrary, at the problem of the persistence of practices grounded in tradition, charisma and the substantive rationality of community in a modern administrative system. For better or worse, the Leprechaun/Trickster politician embodies the 'spirit' of Irish political life. If he were to be eradicated successfully then future prospects may not be a magic purse or a crock of gold, but Weber's iron cage of instrumentality, an ironic parting gift from the Leprechaun Trickster.

CONCLUSION

Trickster is a dangerous and darkly ambiguous figure. Tricksters hurt people, by both impoverishing the state and by demoralising citizens to the extent that they abandon their role in democracy. Trickster is born out of chaos, dwells in chaos, and his actions, as often as not, end in more chaos. The Irish health services, public transport, infrastructure and many other core institutions are a shambles, due not only to chronic under-resourcing, but equally to the fundamentally irrational ministrations of Trickster Leprechauns. But Tricksters are also

cunning and creative. Trickster is a cultural mediator who exhibits 'a great plasticity of behaviour and is, therefore, a consummate survivor in a shifting world' (Hyde, 1998: 43). Perhaps there is something specific in the Irish experience of globalisation that makes the Irish appreciate and admire (and want, somehow, to keep) their Trickster politicians. The Leprechaun politician seems to have served Ireland relatively well in dealing with the fairy realms of Boston and Berlin. The 'lucky Leprechaun' is a national icon because he has somehow managed to deliver the goods of affluence and material prosperity by deftly and cunningly playing both sides of the field. Of course, like any Trickster, his gifts are extremely dubious. Prosperity is superficial and precarious. Wealth is unevenly distributed and is accompanied by spiritual wretchedness and moral decay. Affluence is based on employment and service provision to highly mobile global capital. According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 'Ireland's growth has been driven by foreign direct investment and not by enterprise' (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2000). At the height of the boom in the late 1990s, while Ireland enjoyed the highest growth in Europe, it ranked worst in terms of enterprise. Less than 1 per cent were involved in starting a business (the lowest in the OECD) and of those, 86 per cent expected to employ fewer than five people within five years (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2000). But the fact that 'Ireland doesn't *produce* any technology, it merely *exercises* technology' (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2000: 49) is itself an aspect of the success of Irish Tricksters' strategy. According to Hyde, Trickster has no 'way', no special ability of his own, he simply imitates others. But 'a successful imitator will have, in the end, a repertoire of ways … having no way also means that a creature can adapt itself to a changing world' (Hyde, 1998: 43). Celtic Tiger Ireland is a neoprimitive world in which we rely on the cunning and adaptability of wily Coyote to outwit supernational powers that are otherwise beyond our control.

In return for his questionable services the Irish have been appreciative of the Leprechaun. The Leprechaun has been cunningly and duplicitously courting American investment (with tax incentives and access to European markets) and European Union subsidies and development grants (by being a committed supporter of European integration) despite the recent hiccup of rejecting the first Treaty of Nice. But it should be borne in mind that the electorates of most European Union member states were never given the option of voting on the Treaty at all: administrative and legal-institutional

consolidation have been simply imposed by instrumental action of their respective states. The shadow governments in several key European Union member states are fascist. Expansion of the European Union will include many societies with little or no history of popular participative democracy; countries that have gone from feudal monarchy or nineteenth-century empire to communist bureaucratic authoritarianism, and now to federal Europe and centralised administration. Clientelism and brokerage are by no means unique to Irish political culture. Ireland's level of corruption may be worse than the United Kingdom, or Denmark, or France, but it is considerably less than that of Greece, Portugal and Italy. This is the paradoxical and intractable irrationality at the heart of democracy: 'it is – to use the worn out phrase attributed to Winston Churchill – the worst of all possible systems; the only problem is that there is no other which would be better. That is to say, democracy always entails the problem of corruption, … the only problem is that every attempt to elude this inherent risk and to restore "real" democracy necessarily brings about its opposite – it ends in the abolition of democracy itself' (Žižek, 1989: 5).

Modern rational systems of government attempt to expel Tricksters. But the tribunals' interrogation of Trickster has unintended consequences. It draws out the myth of communicative rationality at the heart of the contemporary system by showing that many people have sympathy with the Trickster mentality, and also by showing how the interrogator of the Trickster is drawn into the patterns of conduct of this shady operator. The paradox of the tribunals is that they appear to represent our desire to eradicate the Trickster from Irish political culture at the very moment when we are enjoying the dubious fruits of his handiwork. Through reflexive modernisation and legal-rational authority we might exorcise our *daemon* and free ourselves from *pishogues*, myths and superstition. But by the same measure we are eradicating the form of political life that has so far proven to be well suited to negotiating the liminal contexts of globalisation in the interstices between Boston and Berlin. It seems unlikely that a people would be willing to dispense with their 'spirit guide' at a time when his services appear to have been helpful, and when no clear alternative has become available.

In the liminal and uncertain moral and political landscape of the mythic age of globalisation the Trickster runs amok. But he needs disciplining not elimination, as, dubious though they are, we cannot do without his services. In 'Politics as a Vocation' Weber

captures the ambivalent character of politics in 'the fact that "good" ends in many cases can be achieved only at the price of morally dubious or at least dangerous means and the possibility, or even the probability, of evil side effects' (Weber, 1978: 218). Trickster is the *daemon* of political life precisely because 'he is *a*moral, not *im*moral. He embodies and enacts that large portion of our experience where good and evil are hopelessly intertwined' (Hyde, 1998: 10). While politics straddles this moral ambivalence and its intractable dilemmas and deadlocks, Trickster represents 'the art of the possible'. Hermes the Trickster represents '*presence of mind*' according to Joyce (cited in Hyde, 1998: 141), an intelligence able to respond to contingency and shape accidents and events: 'agile, shifty in a shifting world … located especially at the spot where roads, parallel and contrary, converge' (Hyde, 1998: 141). 'Where someone's sense of honourable behaviour has left him unable to act, Trickster will appear to suggest an amoral action, something right/wrong that will get things going again' (Hyde, 1998: 7).

According to Weber, 'three qualities … are of decisive importance for the politician: passion, a sense of responsibility and judgement' (1978: 212). Trickster's passions do not have to be extinguished, but they do need taming, tempering with responsibility and judgement. In the mythic cycles chronicled by Radin and Hyde, there are repeated attempts to bind Trickster, not to kill him, but to domesticate him (Hyde, 1998: 221–2). Trickster begins with an enormous sexual appetite and an insatiable gut. He is driven by lust and hunger, and these get him and those around him into much trouble. Through painful experiences he loses the excess portions of these organs, and then, less ridden by lust and hunger, he becomes less harmful and more helpful to humanity: he wises up and becomes more responsible and thoughtful while losing none of his inventiveness. The Greek Tricksters too had to be punished and made to shape up. This is the task of the deities of reason and culture who demand that Zeus, God of just government, a collective representation of the authority of society, intervene to restore order and good balance. When Apollo hauled Hermes before the court of the Gods for stealing his oxen, Zeus was impressed by his trickery and had them settle their differences. Hermes gave Apollo music, and Apollo taught Hermes prognostica-tion. Prometheus was severely punished for his treachery, but Zeus allowed his son Hercules to set him free again in due course, and a chastened Prometheus repaid Hercules with good counsel. The Gods punish Tricksters, make them toe the line, but thereafter they

continue to have a vital role to play. Ireland's Trickster politicians have been chained to the rock for a few years already and the legal eagles are still picking at their livers. What good becomes of this, and what Trickster's next metempsychosis will be, remains to be seen.

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Part 2

The Diversification and Commodification of Irish Identity

3
Culture:
Race and Multiculturalism in Ireland

Orienting Questions

- Is Ireland multicultural?
- Has Ireland a multicultural economy, but not a multicultural society?
- How is Ireland's 'guest worker' approach to non-nationals problematic?
- In what ways are the concepts of racism and prejudice inadequate in capturing the diversity of ways in which non-nationals are excluded from Irish cultural and political life?

This chapter will show how despite the celebration of Ireland as multicultural and cosmopolitan, state policy and public reaction to migrant workers and to refugees and asylum seekers both reflect an anti-cosmopolitan attitude. Irish governments' pursuit of migrant labour on temporary work contracts with limited rights is based on a narrowly economic orientation to migrant workers which views them as factors of production rather than as human beings with rich and vibrant cultural resources who could contribute not only to the globalised Irish economy but to the development of a cosmopolitan Irish society. The instrumental view of migrant workers is in keeping with the tendency of the Irish state to be driven by a one-sided model of social progress that prioritises economic competitiveness over social cohesion and welfare. This shortsightedness of immigration policy and lack of attention to integration is an example of the Irish state's adherence to short- versus long-term economic strategies, and illustrates a failure of public policy. Irish immigration policy reflects the current climate of economic opportunism by emphasising acceptance, but pays no attention to reception or integration. Public unease about immigration can be explained to some degree by the rapid pace of social change, and by the fact that, until recently, Ireland was a relatively monocultural society. It also reflects a 'historical forgetting' and a lapse in collective memory which denies Ireland's diasporic history. Ireland's somewhat open but very opportunistic immigration policy has not occurred in

a vacuum; rather, elements of Irish policy reflect broader tendencies across 'Fortress Europe' to clamp down on non-EU in-migration. Fulfilling demand for labour while limiting citizenship rights in Ireland can be understood to some degree as Ireland's attempt to compete economically within a global system whereby welfare and citizenship provisions are being increasingly cut back. The rationale given is that the economic future of the Celtic Tiger is by no means certain; however, reproducing structural inequalities on the basis of race is detrimental to what O'Neill (2004a) calls 'civic health', and many cultural as well as economic opportunities presented by this newly multiethnic society are being squandered.

THE REVERSAL OF EMIGRATION: THE NEW MULTICULTURALISM?

Since the mid-1990s, net migration into Ireland has been increasing, and has overtaken emigration levels for only the second time since 1921 (Watt, 2002: 6). Rapid economic growth produced a situation of significant labour and skills shortages across many sectors of the Irish labour market, thus creating a demand for migrant labourers from both inside and outside the EU. Accompanying these transformations, a new discourse on Irish identity has emerged, which tries to represent Irishness as 'diasporic, globalised and inclusionary' (Fanning, 2002: 185). A rapid increase in migrants to Ireland combined with new representations of diversity in Ireland both reflected and facilitated this change. For instance, this was demonstrated by the Irish national soccer team, which had both first- and second-generation descendents of emigrants, and was reflected in an RTE commercial sponsored by the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) and the KNOW racism public awareness campaign, which showed a series of individuals from very different ethnic backgrounds proudly proclaiming 'I'm Irish'. As a result, Ireland came to be championed as a cosmopolitan, multicultural society that has generously integrated immigrants into the new Celtic Tiger economy.

As well, the opportunities created by economic growth attracted returning Irish nationals which accounts for two-fifths of the immigration rate. The pattern of inward migration into Ireland in relation to the origin of migrants has changed significantly in recent years and is continuing to alter and, more specifically, there has been a substantial increase in the share of migrants coming to Ireland from outside the EU countries (Watt, 2002: 7). According to

the Immigrant Council of Ireland, the proportion of foreign-born immigrants compared to returning Irish emigrants is expected to rise in future years, since the available pool of would-be returnees is shrinking, due to a fall in Irish emigration in recent years (2003: 6), a tendency which will dramatically alter the ethnic composition of Ireland.

This increase in immigration is a radical change from historical patterns whereby Ireland was characterised by rates of emigration that were so high that Ireland has been described as an 'emigrant nursery' (MacLaughlin, 1994: 6). According to Akenson, from the nineteenth century, the Irish became the 'most internationally dispersed of the European national cultures' (1991: 3). Though emigration was strongly accelerated during the aftermath of the Famine, high rates of emigration predated the Famine period, for it is estimated that 7 million people left Ireland for North America between 1600 and 1922 (MacLaughlin, 1994: 4). From the period immediately following the Famine to the time of Independence, the population of Ireland was nearly halved, and fell from 8.2 million in the 1840s to 4 million in 1946; a net loss of 48 per cent (Courtney, 1995: 48). Post-Famine rates of emigration were so high that Ireland was the only country in western Europe to experience a decline in population in the second half of the nineteenth century (Tovey and Share, 2003: 145). It was hoped that Independence in 1926 would curtail emigration, but this was not the case: after the effects of the Great Depression and World War II had passed, the stream of people leaving returned to nineteenth-century levels (Tovey and Share, 2003: 146), and continued to decline until 1961 apart from a small increase in the postwar years of 1946–61. However, this pattern of emigration has been strongly reversed in recent years; for only the second time in history (the first was in 1921), net immigration figures are now outstripping net emigration rates in Ireland. According to available figures, in the period from 1995 to 2004, 486,300 people moved to the Republic of Ireland. During the same time period, 263,800 people left Ireland, resulting in a net immigration of 222,500 (Crowley, Gilmartin and Kitchin, 2006: 5). The CSO figures of September 2004 reported that the population exceeded 4 million for the first time since 1871. There is evidence that these numbers of migrants will grow in the future, since in the year ending in April 2005, net migration was 53,000 (Fitzgerald, 2006).

Global political factors have influenced the increase in asylum seekers and refugees who have also contributed to net increases in

the migration rate. This increase in immigration to Ireland amongst returnees as well as EU and non-EU migrant workers, students, refugees and asylum seekers is integrally related to broader economic, social and cultural transformations that have been occurring in Ireland since the 1990s. Between 1991 and 2003 the Irish economy grew by an average of 6.8 per cent per annum, peaking at 11.1 per cent in 1999. Unemployment fell from 18 per cent in the late 1980s to 4.2 per cent in 2005, and the Irish Debt/GDP ratio fell from 92 per cent in 1993 to 38 per cent in 1999. This rapid economic growth meant that labour market demand began to exceed what the Irish labour market could supply (Crowley, Gilmartin and Kitchin, 2006: 12), which encouraged the Irish government actively to seek to encourage migrant workers to relocate to Ireland. Economic growth, low interest rates, low rates of unemployment and rising standards of living were not the only factors linked to this reversal of emigration, for Ireland also experienced major social and cultural change during the 1990s, which made it an appealing place both to new migrants and to Irish 'homing pigeons': divorce and homosexuality were legalised and, while the vast majority of the population remained nominally Catholic, there was a massive decline in adherence to Catholic doctrine. While the move from a rural to an urban society had been in progress for some decades, the process accelerated in the 1990s, as the country effectively transformed from a premodern, peasant community to a late modern urban and ex-urban society.

However, this image of a prosperous, harmonious, inclusive and multicultural Ireland is distinctly at odds with the treatment of immigrants in Irish society. In the words of MacEinri, advisor to the Immigrant Council of Ireland:

> Immigration in Ireland is seen mostly as a *problem* rather than as an *opportunity* to compensate for growing labour shortages and to provide a new and vibrant enriching element in a hitherto relatively homogeneous society. Moreover, whereas in a country like Canada immigration is seen as an integral part of the process of nation building and admission is seen as the first stage of a managed process leading to long-term integration and citizenship, in Ireland (as in most other European countries) this is not the case. Policy to date has focused on a pragmatic response to short-term labour market needs and more attention has been paid to admission than to reception and integration. (MacEinri, 2002: 17)

Ireland's immigration policy is limited to control of admission, but gives minimal attention to reception and integration. Failure to develop

a more coordinated, inclusive approach jeopardises the civic health and social cohesion of both our own and future generations.

MIGRANT LABOURERS AS 'GUEST WORKERS'

Since the 1990s the Irish government actively sought to encourage migrant workers to move to Ireland through two particular strategies: the Working Visa/Work Authorisation (WV/WA) programme administered through the Department of Foreign Affairs, and the Work Permits Scheme administered by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) (Crowley, Gilmartin and Kitchin, 2006: 16). The WV/WA programme targets skilled workers for IT, medical and construction sectors, whereas the work permits scheme targets lower-skilled workers outside the European Economic Area (EEA) to work in service, industry, nursing and domestic home help spheres (Crowley, Gilmartin and Kitchin, 2006: 16). The number of work permits issued to non-EEA nationals has increased by 760 per cent during the period 1999–2003 (King, 2005: 5). However, these two schemes result in radically different levels of autonomy for the worker. The WV/WA is a fast-track programme whereby the worker applies for authorisation directly through the Irish embassy in their country. Workers applying for the work permits scheme, however, cannot apply directly; rather their prospective employer must apply, which means that the worker is tied to that site of work and cannot work elsewhere. As a result, workers under this scheme are extremely vulnerable to exploitation. While there has been a shift towards granting WV/WA with greater freedom to switch employers once in Ireland (MacEinri, 2002) rather than the more restrictive work permits system, this two-tiered system still prevails, and such workers are not viewed as part of the long-term population of Ireland and possess no right to stay. Implicit in this system is the idea that migrant workers should be sent home if there is a downturn in the economy.

The Irish immigration regime resembles the German postwar regime where immigrants were seen as economically necessary, but long-term integration was discouraged. Ireland has demonstrated an opportunistic approach to immigrants, and has imported economic migrants to fill low-paid, low-status positions that Irish people no longer want, adopting a 'guest worker' approach of allowing limited rights to 'temporary workers', which has severe negative impacts on workers and families. There is strong evidence of economic and other forms of exploitation of both non-national and EU workers. Recent

data indicates that many Eastern European workers are highly skilled but are employed at a level substantially below their level of training (Fitzgerald, 2006). Despite the fact that migrant labour is being used to fuel the Celtic Tiger, frequently immigrants are scapegoated for a variety of social problems ranging from inflation to overcrowded and inefficient transport, health and education systems, and the public discourse around migrant workers often expresses concern that they are 'stealing our jobs'. As well, when work authorisations or work permits are issued, it is usually to citizens of countries with substantial white populations or to citizens of countries such as the Philippines who share a Catholic heritage (Crowley, Gilmartin and Kitchin, 2006: 17). As Loyal illustrates, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment specifically targets immigrants from white Christian countries to fill job vacancies (Loyal, 2003). In this manner, the work permits system reflects and reproduces exclusionary practices of inhibiting ethnic diversity in a way that directly contradicts claims to cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism.

REFUGEES, ASYLUM SEEKERS AND THE CITIZENSHIP REFERENDUM

One of the reasons why Ireland is said to be increasingly multiethnic, multicultural and 'multicoloured' is because of the number of people entering Ireland who are 'visible monitories'. While people come to Ireland for a variety of reasons, one of the key changes in recent years that has been highlighted by the Irish media is the increase in asylum seekers and refugees. While this increase in asylum applications is nowhere near as dramatic as the media panic would seem to indicate, there has been a quantifiable increase in recent years. For instance, for the five-year period 2001–05, a total of 1,946,200 people sought asylum in Europe and 38,950 (2 per cent) of these sought asylum in Ireland. The UK, France and Germany accounted for a combined total of 881,940 (45.3 per cent); Ireland was in 13th place behind the Czech Republic and just ahead of Greece and Poland. The total number of asylum applicants recognised in Ireland as refugees from 2000 (since the implementation of the Refugee Act 1996 which established the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner (ORAC) and the Refugee Appeals Tribunal (RAT) up to 31 March 2005 is 6,087. According to this system, individuals can be granted refugee status in the first instance, on appeal or can be given 'leave to remain' status as a sort of a last-ditch effort. Of these, 2,431 (just under 40 per cent) were at first instance and 3,656 (just over 60 per cent) were at appeal.

While numbers of applicants who were successfully granted refugee status have increased by 50 per cent from the year 2000 to 2005, these numbers are still not particularly high, and only about 900 applicants were successful in 2005. The top five countries of origin of new asylum applicants to Ireland are Nigeria, Somalia, Romania, Afghanistan and the Sudan (Irish Refugee Council, 2006a).

According to the Irish Refugee Council, there have been substantial improvements in the refugee and asylum seeking procedures since the time in 1999 when it was described as 'a shambles'. However, this system contains many flaws and contradictions, including lack of transparency and some absurd anomalies; for instance, refugees who take out Irish citizenship lose their right to be reunited with immediate family members (*Irish Times*, 13 July 2006). Asylum policy reflects MacEnrie's claim that immigration policy is focused almost entirely on admission rather than reception and integration. For instance, Ireland and Denmark are the only two countries which have opted out of this year's EU-wide 'Reception Directive' which includes proposals granting (limited) access to employment to asylum seekers in the asylum process – and are denied access to third-level education, regardless of their performance in the Leaving Certificate or their length of time in Ireland. In contrast to the EU-wide system which grants limited autonomy, Ireland (and Denmark) operate under the 'direct provision system' introduced in April 2000 whereby asylum seekers are provided with food, lodging (in shared hostel-like accomodations scattered throughout the country) and a guarateed cash payment of only €19.10 per adult or €9.60 per child per week. Uniquely in Europe, Irish and Danish asylum applicants are not legally entitled to work. A poll conducted in May 2005 by the *Irish Times* revealed that the majority of Irish people think that 'non-nationals are too much of a drain on our social welfare system', and that many do not think that 'non-nationals should be entitled to the same welfare benefits as everyone else', an attitude which is not that suprising given that asylum seekers are not working, albeit because they are banned from doing so under the regulations of the direct provision system. This is despite the fact that a majority of the immigrant population in Ireland are taxpayers, third-level students paying fees or asylum seekers with a weekly cash income of just over €19 per adult (*Sunday Tribune*, 'Irish Marketing Survey', 1 May 2005).

Clearly, this system provides minimal autonomy to individuals, and not suprisingly has inadvertently reinforced negative stereotypes

of aslyum seekers. However it affects the civic health of the Irish, the direct provision system is extremely deleterious to the health and wellbeing of those whom it is supposed to serve. Assylum seekers, disconnected from family and community of origin and excluded from the community of arrival, live in anomie. Experiencing simultaneously, lack of autonomy and mobility on the one hand and chronic insecurity and uncertainty on the other, asylum seekers suffer high rates of depression. Children who will know no other home but Ireland are now growing up in full-board 'direct provision' accommodation centres, never having seen a family member go out to work and never having seen a parent cook a family meal. The long-term impact on these families who are living, legally, in Ireland (some since 1999/2000) and on broader society is potentially devastating, since it fosters an intergenerational cycle of structural dependency, reproduces a negative image of asylum seekers, and forecloses any possibility of a positive, constructive identity amongst asylum seekers and their children.

The claim that Ireland is cosmopolitan is clearly contradicted by the radical alteration of definitions of citizenship that have been in place since the 2004 Citizenship Referendum. Prior to this referendum, children born in the Republic were automatically entitled to citizenship, but in this referendum held in June 2004, the Irish electorate voted by a margin of four to one to limit severely the parameters of citizenship, which as of 1 January 2005 was granted primarily in terms of blood ties. A key argument the government put forward in favour of this referendum was that an increasing number of births are taking place by non-nationals in Dublin's maternity hospitals. However, no statistics have been provided that are sufficient to prove the claim that there are large numbers of non-EU nationals coming to Ireland for the sole purpose of giving birth, and most of the arguments in favour of tightening up citizenship requirements were based mostly on anecdotal and subjective evidence. As well, in her study of maternity hospitals in Ireland, King concluded that comprehensive data is not available with regards to the residency status of women delivering in Dublin's maternity hospitals, and of data that is available the total number of non-EU national women who arrived unannounced in 2003 was at most 538, or just under 2.4 per cent of the total number of births in the three main maternity hospitals (King, 2005: 4). People come to Ireland for a variety of purposes, such as with a work permit or visa, seeking asylum, people with refugee status, non-national partners of Irish citizens, and so on (King, 2005:

4), and the increase in immigrants can be seen as a direct result of state policy designed to require workers to fill gaps in the Irish labour market, an increase in granting of student visas, and the fulfilment of the county's obligations as a signatory of the Geneva convention (King, 2005: 7). Yet the language used in the media coverage that predated this referendum explicitly framed all non-national citizens as exploiters of Ireland's 'generosity', using terms such as 'maternity tourism', 'citizenship tourism', 'exploitation' and 'abuse' of Ireland's citizenship loophole (Breen, Haynes and Devereux, 2006), terms which reproduced and perpetuated xenophobic public opinion and homogenised the experience and motivations of non-nationals. The selective interpretation and manipulation of available data regarding non-nationals is consistent with a broader immigration approach of 'Fortress Europe' which is seeking to limit severely non-nationals seeking EU membership.

The removal of the automatic entitlement to citizenship on the basis of being born in the Irish state is very contradictory given that the 'grandfather clause' based on blood ties will remain. This clause means it is possible to grant citizenship to a person who has no connection with Ireland, other than the fact that one of her or his parents is registered on the Foreign Births Register or has an Irish-born grandparent. The presence of a definition of citizenship on the basis of blood ties in the absence of a definition based on residence is profoundly contradictory, and prioritises biological lineage over social contribution. Moreover, Crowley, Gilmartin and Kitchen (2006) reveal the contradictory logic at play in the campaign for 'Commonsense Citizenship', a campaign which, despite Ireland's long history of emigration and the collective experience as objects of racism in other countries, culminated in a new, radically limited definition of Irish citizenship based on an essentialised version of Irishness which constructed all immigrants as a suspect and threatening Other. This construction of immigrants is directly contradictory to the fact that Irish identity has itself traditionally been associated with the act of migration. Furthermore, this construction of migrants as an alien, hostile Other is at odds with the fact that according to the Irish Immigrant Council, returning Irish emigrants represented 40 per cent of immigrants into Ireland, or about two-fifths of the recent immigrant growth (although it must be noted that this proportion will decrease in coming years because the available pool of would-be returnees is shrinking). This referendum refuses to grant basic citizenship rights to the majority of migrants to Ireland who are

not returning Irish-born emigrants. Public discourse on immigration tends to focus on refugees and asylum seekers despite the fact that they represent only a small proportion of the overall number of immigrants: most immigrants to Ireland are either returning Irish and their families, or citizens of EU countries, most notably the UK (Crowley, Gilmartin and Kitchin, 2006: 20). Between 1995 and 2004, 45 per cent of the immigrants to Ireland were Irish, 30 per cent were from the EU and only 10 per cent of all foreign immigrants were asylum seekers and refugees (Crowley, Gilmartin and Kitchin, 2006: 20).

What this referendum revealed is that the Irish populace sees refugees and asylum seekers as a threat, as 'spongers' and parasites, despite the fact that they are not entitled to work. The guest worker system of temporary work permits reveals a similar ambivalence towards the Other who is represented as 'stealing our jobs'. There is a central paradox with regard to Ireland's treatment of migrant workers and non-nationals, which contains the same dynamics of exploitation that waves of labour emigrants from Ireland were subject to when they emigrated to the US, the UK and elsewhere in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In a somewhat similar vein, Moriarty (2005) suggests that the Irish state has adopted (falsely) contradictory positions on immigration and racism; on the one hand promoting diversity and equality via the KNOW Racism campaign, and on the other implementing restrictive and exclusionary immigration policies.

This referendum has marked a sea change in Irish legislation against non-nationals, which has been reflected in a variety of subsequent decisions with regards to citizenship applications. Many non-national parents of children who were citizens by birth prior to the referendum have had their citizenship applications refused, which is tantamount to a deportation order. For instance, an estimated 1,120 people have had applications refused under the Irish-born child 2005 (IBC05) scheme, a revised arrangement that resulted from the new citizenship regulations following the referendum, which were put in effect on 1 January 2005. These refusals, enacted by Minister for Justice Michael McDowell, were justified on the basis of a 2003 Supreme Court ruling on the Lobe case, a case which established the precedent that non-Irish parents of Irish-born children did not have automatic entitlement to remain in the country (*Irish Times*, 14 November 2006). The Minister refused these applications claiming that the legitimacy of the asylum system took precedence over the

rights of the children. However, in a decision that marked a minor victory for immigrants' rights, a High Court ruling made by Ms Justice Mary Finlay Geoghegan on 14 November 2006 reversed the Minister's decisions in all but one case on the basis that these refusals were both unconstitutional (to the rights of the Irish citizen children) and unlawful and inconsistent with regards to the European Convention on Human Rights Act of 2003. Her argument was based on the claim that the refusal of the parents' applications to remain without any consideration of the rights, including welfare, of the Irish citizen children was unlawful as it breached the rights of their Irish citizen children guaranteed under the Constitution, and that this decision failed to consider the private rights of the Irish citizen children, and their personal and social relationships which result from living here (*Irish Times*, 15 November 2006).

Geoghegan's decision is in keeping with the Irish state's recent commitment to the rights of the child, as expressed in the Taoiseach's 2006 proposal to hold a referendum on the rights of children and young people under 18 years old. This proposal which emerged in part out of recommendations from the UN committee on the rights of the child in Geneva in September 2006, and has received the strong support of government bodies, NGOs and the public, particularly in the context of various high-profile court cases which raised the issue of the rights of young children such as the November 2006 case involving 'baby Ann', where a child was taken from her adoptive parents because the unwed biological parents had since married and wished to reclaim the child. The judges admitted that the decision to separate the child from her loving adoptive parents with whom she had bonded was a difficult one, but they claimed that the Constitution gave such prominence to the family and the rights of the family. However, this alleged concern for protecting the rights of the family seemingly is only selectively expressed, and as the 2003 Supreme Court ruling on the Lobe case reveals, is not an issue when the child is black. In the Lobe case, the judges were asked to decide whether an Irish citizen child could be deprived of the company of her natural parents, who were facing deportation, yet in this instance, the rights of the child did not matter. As Vincent Browne has pointed out, 'In the Lobe case, the child was black, but with all the constitutional entitlements that baby Ann has, because that black child was an Irish citizen. So why should the rights of the Lobe child be any different from the rights of baby Ann?' (*Sunday Business Post*, 19 November 2006). Clearly the concern with the rights

of the child do not extend to children that are non-white, even if they are citizens. These contradictions at the heart of Ireland's legal and political structures reveal the implicit racism inherent in Irish society, and the two-tiered system that operates informally in legal and political decision-making.

One of the key problems is that migration policy discourse is based on primarily economic considerations. Globalisation increasingly demands the circulation of labour around the globe. But labour, concieved of abstractly as a 'factor of production', a commodity, is a commodity unique amongst commodities, as it comes encumbered with its families, bodies, needs and wants beyond their labour power. Global capitalism demands the commodity, but is perturbed by its 'surplus packaging' (Gilligan, 2006: 50). This can be seen in many of the contemporary discussions of managed migration, which argues for the necessity of measures that will ease the circulation of labour as though it were merely a commodity, but will constrain and regulate its human 'surplus packaging'. As Gilligan points out, the proposed international regime of managed migration is so subject to processes of rationalisation and calculation (Ghosh, 2000; Veenkamp, 2003) that it reads like a 'combination of a customer services division of international trade and a new transnational thought police' (Gilligan, 2006: 50). In the manner of Johnathan Swift's 'A Modest Proposal', Gilligan parodies this commodification of migrant labour, and speaks of how we must ensure that the 'correct components' are delivered to the most appropriate points in the supply chain (health workers, for example, manufactured in South Asia and South East Asia and then shipped to points of consumption in western European health services) of how 'faulty goods' or those which were not ordered (refugees and asylum seekers) are returned to the manufacturer; of how 'service operators' who do not file their tax returns and/or operate outside of trading standards (traffickers) need to be punished severely, and so on (Gilligan, 2006).

COSMOPOLITAN AS NEOIMPERIALISM?

The term 'cosmopolitan' was used by the ancient Greek philosophers to refer to the idea that all individuals belong to a single moral community regardless of national, religious or political affiliation. This term was derived from *cosmos* (world) + *polis* (city, people, citizenry) to describe a (potentially) more egalitarian concept of 'world citizenship', understood as a universal love of humankind as

a whole, regardless of nation.[1] To be truly cosmopolitan, one must be open to and appreciative of a variety of cultural influences. In this understanding of the term one has an 'enthusiasm for cultural differences', though in the words of Brennan, 'but … as material for a unified polychromatic culture – a new singularity born of a blending and merging of multiple local constituents' (2003: 41). Recently, this term has been used frequently to refer to the Irish situation; for instance, John Fitzgerald's Lovett Memorial Lecture at the University of Limerick in 2006 was entitled 'A Cosmopolitan Workforce' and in a recent book entitled *The Global Me*, Zachary claims Ireland is a multicultural, cosmopolitan country with immigrants 'adding diversity and lifting the Irish economy to new heights' (2000: 161).

However, if we examine the historical evolution of this term, it is clear that it has two distinct meanings. The term 'cosmopolitan' was used to describe well-travelled Victorian adventurers, and thus is quite clearly associated with the colonial expansion of urban centres or metropolitan regions in the nineteenth century as a legitimation of their encroachment on geopolitically dispersed or vulnerable outlying territories. Within this context, cosmopolitan is used to describe individuals who are very well travelled, multilingual and familiar with a broad array of cultures and customs, but who do not believe in the Greek notion of according dignity and respect to all individuals. Appiah (2006) describes a Victorian adventurer named Sir Richard Francis Burton as the prototypical 'rootless' cosmopolitan: Burton was an accomplished linguist who spoke many languages including Arabic and Hindi, was well versed in world literature and religion, and had travelled extensively over Africa, Asia and Latin America; yet he expressed a radically Eurocentric view of the world, had clearly defined notions of the appropriate racial hierarchies, and did not hesitate to purchase slaves. This particular version of cosmopolitanism has been called 'imperial cosmopolitanism' by Gramsci (1971: 371). Furthermore, this version of imperial cosmopolitanism is quite apparent in the tendency towards 'culturalism' in contemporary thought, and is apparent in the idealisation and celebration of versions of hybridity, polyvocality, heteroglossia and polyidentity, which celebrate diversity, but do not challenge global political relations wherein the periphery is cultural fodder for the centre. Such uncritical and culturalist images are deeply problematic because they present 'other cultures' exclusively as a resource to be used or consumed to 'cosmopolitanise' the urban, western and the 'core'; they propagate the ideological illusion that in 'consuming'

ethnicity we are contributing to global multiculturality. An exaggerated example of this is the Disney corporation which promotes an ideal of harmonious multiethnicity in its amusement park ride, 'It's a Small World'. However, Disney was recent exposed by 'sweatshop busters' for employing illegal child labour in South East Asia (Klein, 2002), a contradiction which shows how images of multiculturalism do not necessarily challenge global political inequalities, and at times even cynically reproduce such inequalities. In these imperialist under-standings of cosmopolitanism, the idea of the appreciation and care for other cultures as a moral imperative is conspicuously absent, and therefore an understanding of imperialist cosmopolitanism is useful in understanding the Irish situation today.

This same tension between singularity and plurality or, it could be argued, cultural imperialism and democracy, is a tension that exists within concepts of multiculturalism as well. Multicultural-ism is a contested term, in that it presumes that integration can be achieved by state policy. As well, there are various models of mul-ticulturalism for instance, an older model of assimilation, whereby the minority group adopts the culture and values of the majority, has been replaced by a newer, more interactive model in which the majority society absorbs some elements of the culture and values of the minority, while the minority adapt to the majority society. Both are in contrast to the model of cultural pluralism or multicultural-ism whereby the minority and majority maintain their own culture and values, distinct from each other (Faist, 2003; Gilligan, 2006). Although multiculturalism has several meanings, debates about which type of multicultural society we wish to pursue in Ireland are underdeveloped, and existing structures and procedures are not sufficiently problematised. As a result, Irish social policy with regard to multiculturalism has a contradictory agenda, in that on the one hand, it promotes integration, but on the other, it actively and sys-tematically reproduces inequalities between different groups. These stark contradictions in state approaches to multiculturalism in Ireland are glossed under harmonious and idealised representations of Irish society as multicultural and diverse. Such contradictions are also inherent in the idea of cosmopolitanism, since historically it has been used to mean both a socially elite status that can be purchased, and as a potentially emancipatory concept of 'world citizenship' committed to reducing, not increasing, forms of social exclusion of non-nationals.

PSYCHOANALYSIS, OTHERING AND THE
IMPOSSIBILITY OF COSMOPOLITANISM?

At the same time as the processes of globalisation and human migration have become accelerated in the second half of the twentieth century, issues of 'Othering' and how 'difference' is constructed have become increasingly significant. Women and colonised people have been constructed as Other within western Enlightenment thought. Rational authority has been historically predicated on the construction of mutually sustaining binary oppositions between white/black, reason/emotion, civilised/primitive, rational/irrational, culture/nature, male/female where the former set of signifiers are perceived as superior, and the latter as inferior within this value system. For example, these critiques argue that the western, European sense of identity has been dependent on the devaluation of various Others, including women (DeBouvoir, 1953), so-called primitives (Torgovnick, 1990), Orientals (Said, 1978), black people (Fanon, 1986 [1952]), colonised people (Memmi, 1990) and nature (Haraway, 1991). These critiques claim that such dualisms inscribed in western rationality have been used to justify the superiority of the rational, culture, the mind, the civilised, white and the male over the irrational, nature, the body, the primitive, black and the female, and thus have legitimated the colonialist, imperialist and patriarchal imperatives of instrumental rationality. Specifically, psychoanalysis has been used by postcolonial theorists such as Said, Memmi and Fanon to illustrate how the history of colonialism is rooted psychoanalytically in the refusal of the white person to give recognition to the black person within colonial relations. Many authors have illustrated how European culture and politics conspired in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to justify colonialism by constructing a particular European identity that was defined in opposition to a non-European, non-western Other, which is often denigrated, feminised, infantilised and otherwise disrespected. For instance, Said illustrates how the formation of colonial and imperial attitudes towards the Orient, defining it as 'barbarian, pagan, ape, female' (Said, 1986: 7), was one of the ways colonisers justified the exploitation and domination of the colonised.

The question of Ireland's status with regards to the postcolonial project has long been a source of contention. Although subject to repeated invasion by a range of ethnic and political factions from mainland Britain (beginning with the Anglo-Norman incursion of

1170 and followed variously by the Scots, and the English under both Elizabeth and Cromwell), it is not easy to incorporate Ireland into a colonial paradigm. The participation of Irish citizens as collaborators to the imperialist project, and as agents of British administrative and military control in the wider empire, has been cited as evidence that contradicts claims that Ireland can best be defined as a former colony of Britain. As well, Ireland's status as 'mother country' to a sprawling diaspora in the wake of mass emigration in the latter parts of the nineteenth century calls into question this categorisation of Ireland as a colony. This 'double positioning' of Ireland as colonised and coloniser has complicated a subsumption of Ireland into a postcolonial paradigm. As Westcott (2004: 1) has noted, it is only recently that Ireland has been discussed with reference to postcolonial literature, and none of the early critical readers on postcolonial studies contains reference to Ireland. As well, many commentators have questioned the relevance of postcolonial theory to the Irish or the Scottish situation, given that many Irish and Scottish were collaborators to the imperial project. Nonetheless, there are aspects of postcolonial theory that make sense within an Irish context. Curtis (1984), Peart (2002) and Hayes (2006) have demonstrated how various English writers imposed a very particular representation of the Irish as Other in order to legitimate the colonialist project. For instance, the works of Anglo-Norman churchman Giraldus Cambrensis in the late 1180s justified the invasion of Ireland on religious grounds, and created a prototype of the Irish as a barbaric, bestial, corrupt, filthy and immoral Other that was to last for centuries (Hayes, 2006: 83). This representation of the Irish as uncivilised and uncontrollable used this discursive structure for the purposes of psychological demoralisation described by Said, which is intended both to strengthen the self-image of the coloniser while providing a demoralising image of the colonised which is then partially internalised.

Ireland's problematic relationship to immigration, migrant workers and refugees can be interpreted against this backdrop of trauma, ambivalence and amnesia. For instance, Kirby, Gibbons and Cronin argue that Ireland now projects a self-image as modern, liberal, progressive and multicultural in order to win international acceptance, but that this new, reinvented Ireland is based on the repression of historical memory and a denial of many aspects of Irish history, in particular, the Irish experience of trauma, diaspora and colonisation (2002: 197). Further, Moane argues that Irish history is a profoundly traumatic history, and is marked by the repeated occurrence of dispos-

session, loss and defeat (2002: 113). Though there were considerable variations in the extent to which individuals were oppressed (or were in some cases oppressors) during Ireland's history of the Famine, Civil War, emigration and conflicts over partition, Moane claims that 'to focus on the specificities and variations within the Irish context is to ignore the overarching patterns of domination which endured for hundreds of years and which clearly have left economic, political cultural, social and psychological legacies' (2002: 113). To Moane, the psychosocial legacy of these traumas (and retraumatisations that occurred, for instance during periods of emigration where the Irish were also subject to racism in their host country) has been the transmission of trauma across generations characterised by silence, shame, guilt and obsessive compulsive patterns and addictions.

One of the results of this historical forgetting is that Irish multicultural policy is characterised by an assimilationist approach, rather than one based on cultural pluralism. Ireland has a multicultural economy, but not a multicultural society, and is characterised by what Fanning calls a 'weak multiculturalism' where the 'image of diversity proliferates, but where the aim is to manage diversity rather than contest inequalities' (Fanning, 2002: 179). One of the explanations for why Ireland has retained an overwhelmingly assimilationist view of multiculturalism can be identified within the perceived need to construct a homogenous view of the 'true Irish' people and culture as a form of resistance to colonial oppression. The idea of an Irish race was used in late nineteenth century Catholic Irish nationalist rhetoric to negate claims of the inferiority of the Irish within colonial ideology (Fanning, 2002: 9). This construction of a monocultural homogenous Irish identity was an important part of both pre- and post-Independence projects of nation-building. The emerging Irish nation state set about establishing and supporting a very particular set of organisations and institutions such as the Catholic church, republican parties, the Irish language crusade and the Gaelic Athletics Association (GAA), which became markers of national 'authenticity' (Crowley, Gilmartin and Kitchin, 2006: 10). The reification of these organisations and the 'traditions' they supported had the effect of falsely homogenising Irish culture and of exising cultural forms deemed to be Other, apparent for instance in the GAA ban on 'foreign' games such as rugby or soccer. The process of identity construction often requires inventing or at the very least selectivly constructing 'tradition'.

THE UNCERTAINTY OF 'IDENTITY' AND
THE OTHER AS 'THIEF OF ENJOYMENT'

Ireland's treatment of migrant workers and non-nationals is deeply paradoxical and ambivalent: 'Irish people see little apparent contradiction between the affirmation of the long-exercised right of emigration to other countries and the application of a regime in Ireland itself which would be regarded as unacceptable if imposed on Irish migrants elsewhere' (MacEneri, 2002: 16). Crowley, Gilmartin and Kitchen echo this sentiment in their claim that,'Migrant workers … give to the state, and contribute to its social and economic life, but are entitled to nothing beyond a wage' (2006: 14).

The fantasy structure of the immigrant is that the immigrant is 'like us' in various ways which we find pleasing and flattering – they're religious, family oriented, hard working, and they know how to have a good time. That they 'want to come over here' seems to confirm for us some of our most treasured conceits of Irish identity, as though they, the immigrants, can still see in us what we fear that we might be losing – family and community life, our laid back attitudes, our ability to 'have the crack' – in a word, our enjoyment. Immigrants are welcomed in so far as they are seen to affirm and shore up 'our way of life' – our churches are full again, they take part in St Patrick's Day parades, and so on. When we say that Ireland is cosmopolitan often we are misrecognising that what we are really celebrating by saying that is exactly the opposite: it's not that we are celebrating what immigrants are bringing to us from their culture, but rather that through their presence we can see ourselves, our conceits of traditional, national identity, in a refreshed and flattering light.

Immigrants, simply by their presence, affirm our way of life, remind us of who we are, of where we've come from, and give legitimacy to what we have now and where we imagine ourselves in the future – affluent and progressive, a global, even cosmopolitan society, but still a moral community, a people with roots, traditions and a coherent collective history. Irish people, through the presence of Polish migrant workers, recollect the experiences of generations of Irish migrants in England and America in the 1950s and the 1980s. They were dominated by the Russians and before them the Germans, historical victims, just like we were. They are 'hardworking, decent people' just like we ourselves were, and still are, we like to imagine. Nigerian asylum seekers were educated by Irish missionaries, and they value education, religion and family life, as we ourselves do

– or at least used to do. A few, like our own 'cute hoors', engage in criminal activity. But this is only half the story. We welcome the immigrant not for the gift he or she brings from their culture, but for the affirmation and confirmation of what we imagine that we have already, our identity. The immigrant is not constructed in terms of being a cultural gift giver – in fact we see ourselves as the generous ones, giving him or her a job, usually a poorly paid, exploitative job in which the labourer in fact gives much more than he or she receives. Instead the immigrant is constructed as a thief, the 'thief of enjoyment'. In the fantasy structure of racism and xenophobia immigrants threaten to 'steal' our way of life. For the lunatic fringe such as the Immigration Control Platform this accusation of theft is explicit, but even common or garden, everyday discourse on immigration is animated by this anxiety. Refugees and asylum seekers are not legally entitled to work, nonetheless they are often constructed as 'spongers' and 'wasters'. We know that we drink, even that we drink a lot, but we say that they drink too much. We drink and drive and have a lax attitude to rules and regulations, but they, the immigrants, are 'even worse than us!' They are a hazard on our roads. They 'know every scam!' We may have criminal gangs involved in the drugs and guns trade, but we imagine that their criminals are even worse – trafficking in sex slaves, bringing in Kalashnikovs (as though we don't have plenty of those already!) and so on. Even when they are good they are bad: migrant workers are 'great workers', but at the same time we say that they work too hard or that they work for nothing, jeopardising our own jobs. They are mass-going and moral, but they are 'ultra-Catholic' and 'reactionary'. The Other always appears to us to be excessive in some way, and this excess that pertains to the Other endangers and threatens to steal our enjoyment. The deep reason for the fear of the Other as the thief of enjoyment is the traumatic fact that we never possessed what we fear will be stolen in the first place. As we have seen above, the narrative of Irish history and identity is highly fraught and uncertain: are we an historically oppressed people, heroic revolutionaries, or were we fully complicit in imperialism and oppressors ourselves? Are we a moral and spiritual people, or were we unthinking dupes of an authoritarian church? Are our traditions really ours? Our traditional music, its forms and its instruments are Continental, maritime and military, as in the case of the artificial 'tradition' of Irish dance, for instance. The Other's way of life, identity, serves as a foil or a mirror from which we can reflect and recognise our own enjoyment. But on the

other hand, as with any relation of reflection and recognition, there is an unsettling reciprocal effect. The strangeness of the Other's way of life, its difference, raises the possibility that our own way of life, our own identity may be strange, uncertain and insecure too. For this we hate the Other, but it is a paradoxical and ambivalent hatred that, according to Lacan, is inextricably anchored in uncertainty, insecurity, fear and self-hatred:

Why does the Other remain Other? What is the cause for our hatred of him, for our hatred of him is his very being? It is hatred of the enjoyment of the Other. This would be the most general formula of the modern racism we are witnessing today: a hatred of the particular way the Other enjoys ... The question of tolerance or intolerance is not at all concerned with the subject of science and its human rights. It is located on the level of tolerance or intolerance toward the enjoyment of the Other, the Other as he who essentially steals my own enjoyment. ... The problem is apparently unsolvable as the Other is the Other in my interior. The root of racism is thus hatred of my own enjoyment. There is no other enjoyment but my own. If the Other is in me, occupying the place of extimacy, the hatred is also my own. (Lacan, unpublished lecture, quoted in Žižek, 1993: 203)

This analysis of Othering, recognition and misrecognition suggests that the collective 'talking cure' for racism and xenophobia lies within a reflexive interrogation with the self, and the reconciliation of how past traumas led to the projection and displacement onto an alien Other. But the problem of racism and ethnocentrism remains ultimately intractable as the Other is the Other in our interior. However, even if we acknowledge that the problem of racism is extremely complex – historically deep-rooted; culturally dispersed and diffuse in forms that are subtle and gross; anthropologically deep-seated in the unavoidable ethnocentrism of the interpretive horizons of subjective lifeworlds; psychoanalytically constitutive of the subject as internally divided against him or herself; ontologically and existentially the ultimate grounds of the human condition – and hatred of the Other is symptomatic of hatred of the meaningless and 'lack' underpinning our own existence – this is not to say that we cannot ameliorate and counteract the problem of racism and that we cannot have a coherent immigration policy that will foster a healthy civil society in which the wellbeing and happiness of all members, natives and newcomers are catered for.

FROM RECOGNITION TO REDISTRIBUTION:
THE POSSIBILITY OF COSMOPOLITAN CIVIC CAPITALISM

One way in which we might transcend the apparent intractabil-
ity of racism in Ireland (and indeed elsewhere) is to look at two
distinct paradigms of social justice: recognition and redistribution.
Axel Honneth (1995) has formulated a theory of social recognition
and corresponding forms of distorted, mis- or mal-recognition that
provides an elegant and powerful analysis and critique of unequal
and antagonistic social relations such as gender and sexuality, race
and ethnicity, status and social exclusion. Briefly, Honneth says there
are three spheres of social recognition: the private sphere of family
and friendships; the sphere of rights and legal entitlements; and
the sphere of cultural and political solidarity. Each of these spheres
entails a mode of practical relations to the self, constituting a person's
identity. In the intimate sphere, recognition relations from one's
family and friends – emotional support – is the basis of an individual's
self-confidence. In the second sphere, the recognition of a person's
rights and legal entitlements as a citizen forms the basis of a person's
self-respect. And the sphere of mutual recognition in relations of
cultural and political solidarity where values are shared is the basis
of a person's self-esteem. Misrecognition and disrespect experienced
in any one or more of these spheres are damaging to a person's
core identity, to their dignity as a human being, and depending
on the severity and level of institutionalisation can be devastating
for individuals or groups subject to misrecognition and disrespect.
Using this framework one can show, for example, the nature, the
extent and the depth of damage done to women, racial and ethnic
minorities, homosexuals and members of all sorts of marginalised,
socially excluded and under-recognised and disrespected groups and
peoples. The struggle for recognition, Honneth says, is the moral
grammar of social conflict at the heart of contemporary politics.

Nancy Fraser's engagement with Honneth's recognition paradigm
is not so much a critique as it is an attempt to bring it to bear on the
problem of redistribution, as so much of the politics of recognition
have been focused too narrowly on questions of identity politics
and forms of symbolic violence, and this has often overshadowed
persistent, recurrent and deeply institutionalised structural economic
inequalities (Fraser and Honneth, 2003). Fraser argues that claims for
recognition, for increased sensitivity and respect towards distinct
cultures and identities by majority culture, take the form of abstract

assertions of cultural particularity which are all too often no longer articulated within demands for economic redistribution made on the basis of a systematic structural or economic inequality. This problem with the recognition paradigm is clearly apparent in Ireland where a weak version of multiculturalism predominates, a version which includes legislation against racially motivated attacks, hate speech and overt acts of racial discrimination, which promotes recognition through the KNOW Racism campaign and 'anti-racism in the workplace day', for example, but which contains no positive or 'strong' strategy of citizenship based on equalisation and defence of rights, duties and entitlements. In this way, Irish multicultural-ism is equated simply with a tolerance of minority cultures which reproduces a dichotomy between 'us' and 'them', and leaves the predominantly monocultural hegemonic structure untouched. Even within the grammatical terms of the recognition paradigm, tolerance is a minimal value orientation, and doesn't assert the deeper ideals of respect and the duty of care for the wellbeing of the Other which would entail active and systematic intervention to reduce and to eliminate structural inequalities by, for example, the provision of free language classes for immigrants, a minimal intervention to help level the labour market playing field, and extending potentially to housing, social security and family support. Irish official anti-racism 'recognition' campaigns focus purely on cultural or symbolic issues such as promoting positive images of racial minorities but ignore embedded economic inequalities; and often promote a sanitised, homogenised version of ethnic and cultural difference that is deeply problematic. Although some aspects of Irish integration policy advocates recognition of minorities, none is focused on redistribution, and as a result the civic health of future generations is jeopardised.

On the other hand, Fraser describes the struggle for redistribution as an attempt to reverse structural inequalities produced by racism which inhibit members of certain minority groups from full civic participation; for example, strategies such as positive discrimination and affirmative action. Though it is clear that structural racism is a strong inhibitor to full participation, and that patterns of 'maldis-tribution' on the basis of race and ethnic lines are clear, there are currently no redistributive strategies practiced in Ireland based on race or ethnicity. Fraser's key insight is that simply condemning racist acts, beliefs and representations without at the same time challenging the way they become institutionalised in reproducing economic inequalities is insufficient, and may even reproduce the

unequal power relations they purport to dismantle. Fraser's critique of the 'vulgar culturalism' of some understandings of racism is very relevant to the Irish context where racism is narrowly defined as attacks, hate speech and overt acts of discrimination, but where there is no acknowledgement of the structural inequalities produced by racism (Fanning, 2002: 178). To put this in the context of Fraser's discussion of recognition and redistribution, a 'weak multicultural-ism' persists in Ireland which vaguely prohibits 'misrecognition', or distorted versions of the identity of minority groups, but which makes no connection to the politics of redistribution, and places no emphasis on rights or entitlements. Put more strongly, the notion of citizenship in this context becomes deeply impoverished because it becomes equated simply with a tolerance of minority cultures, it constructs a fixed 'we' or 'us' who are capable, if necessary, of tolerating the existence of those defined as 'other' or 'them' (Fanning, 2002: 179). Former Minister of Justice Patrick Cooney stated at the European Parliament's 1991 Committee of Inquiry on Racism and Xenophobia that Ireland was 'remarkably free of racism' since there is 'not a large presence of foreigners'.[2] This analysis puts the blame for racism on the minority communities themselves rather than on those who are perpetuating racist acts and beliefs.

REDISTRIBUTION: A 'HEALTHY' COSMOPOLITANISM

Rather than defensively reacting to this and reproducing structural racism and other divisions produced by the marketisation of the state, we should instead try to build a 'sustainable civic society' (O'Neill, 2004a: 16), based on the idea of what O'Neill calls 'civic capitalism' which acknowledges the unlikelihood of any alternative to capitalism, yet tries to 'sustain our option of civilising capitalism by defending the civic state as the trustee of fairness, equality and social justice' (2004a: 5). Stratification along race and ethnic lines contributes to an overall decline in social wellbeing, for as Wilkinson (1996, 2005), Marmot (2005), and Sullivan and Baranek (2002) have clearly demonstrated, there is a strong link between social cohesion and health. 'The crucial evidence on this comes from a discovery of a strong international relationship between income distribution and national mortality rates. In the developed world, it is not the richest countries which have the best health, but the most egalitarian' (Wilkinson, 1996: 3). Others such as Kawachi and Kennedy (2002) have pointed out the link between health defined in medical terms

and how overall civic health is greatly improved by social equality and social cohesion. In order to overcome the fragmenting effects of modernity and the difficulty in establishing a consensus or a collective view of the 'common good', O'Neill argues for the idea of 'civic childhood' (2004a: 11) as the appropriate goal of capitalism and democracy, since children and young families represent the least-advantaged members of society, yet bear the brunt of socio-economic risks of globalisation. This strategy has the capacity to help us imagine a version of the 'common good' regardless of our differences, since we all love our children (and are capable of not wishing harm to other people's children), and can help orient our vision to the future, rather than remaining stuck in the perpetual present, or cleaving nostalgically to an imagined past.

CONCLUSION: TOWARDS A COSMOPOLITAN MULTICULTURALISM

Many commentators have shown how both theories of cosmo-politanism and theories of multiculturalism are often based on individualistic and social ontologies and are proposed within a narrow framework which presumes a culture of privilege. Calhoun (2003) argues that the unself-reflexive celebration of mobility in many conceptions of cosmopolitanism presumes an elite social and occupational status and privileges not available to the majority of the world's people. As well, cosmopolitanism disparages the local and conceives of identity as choice, ignoring involuntarily localised or racialised individuals whose identities are ascribed or imposed, and who are most in need of a strong cosmopolitics. Žižek reiterates this in his critique of what he calls multiculturalist postmodern-ism. In focusing purely on cultural 'representation' and ignoring economic inequalities by abstractly embracing 'cultural tolerance' and equal 'respect' for the cultures of affluent and poor nations, Žižek argues, multiculturalist postmodernism depoliticises the issue of 'representation' and paradoxically reproduces a new set of political and economic exclusions (Žižek, 1999: 218). He accuses multicul-turalists of 'a patronising Eurocentrist distance and/or respect for local cultures without roots in one's own particular culture' (1999: 216) and argues that the current liberal discourse of multicultural-ism is really cultural imperialism, since it 'retains this position as the privileged empty point of universality, from which one is able to appreciate (and depreciate) other particular cultures properly – the multiculturalists' respect for the Other's specificity is the very form

of asserting one's own superiority' (Žižek, 1999: 216). Contemporary Ireland, O'Toole (2003) remarks, has become postmodern without ever having managed to become modern, but to imagine that our 'great leap forward' has produced a multicultural, cosmopolitan healthy civil society is mistaken, naive or deeply ideological. It is in fact the challenge of our time. Cosmopolitanism is a new form of social critique, philosophy and practice, which is gaining momentum in political and social theory that 'declares its opposition to all forms of ethnic nationalism and religious fundamentalism as well as to the economic imperatives of global capitalism' (Fine, 2003: 451). It perceives the integrity of contemporary political life as threatened by the globalisation of markets and it 'aims to reconstruct political life on the basis of an enlightened vision of peaceful relations between nation states, human rights shared by all world citizens, and a global legal order buttressed by a global civil society' (Fine, 2003: 451). The more emancipatory understandings of cosmopolitanism, understood as 'world citizenship', have been recently revived by theorists such as Habermas and Held, who are attempting to develop a version of 'cosmopolitan citizenship' that can provide a moral and political framework of universal rights and political consensus which could challenge neoliberal globalisation.

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4
Consumption:
Guinness, Ballygowan and *Riverdance*:
The Globalisation of Irish Identity

Orienting Questions

- How is the economic boom related to the Irish cultural renaissance?
- How are representations of Irish culture both pre- and postmodern?
- What are the limitations and potentials of current representations of Irishness?
- What tensions exist between cultural creativity and the culture industry?

In this chapter we will examine representations of Irish identity in advertising campaigns for Guinness, Ballygowan and Jameson (international brand name commodities that trade on their Irishness), and *Riverdance* (a contemporary Irish work of art that is also a successful global commodity). These representations/arts/products/commodities exist at the crossroads of the local and the global. Ballygowan's ad campaigns show how the branding of a nation has shifted from selling 'Celtic' imagery apparent in the ad campaign entitled the 'Children of Lir' to the 'Bodies Never Lie' campaign of cosmopolitan, multicultural, urban young dancers. Guinness's ad campaign 'Knowing What Matters' paradoxically appeals to a traditional version of Irish community and solidarity despite the fact that Guinness is now owned by Diageo, a global, multinational corporation. Jameson's ad theme of 'Beyond the Obvious' challenges conventional notions of Irishness by juxtaposing symbols of traditional culture with ethnic minorities. The Ballygowan, Guinness and Jameson advertising campaigns are examples of the ways in which artistic creativity is brought into the service of commerce and merchandising under conditions of global consumer capitalism. But in so far as art – even in advertising – retains a utopian moment, these commodity representations intimate aspirational ideals of a cosmopolitan Irish identity that have progressive, even radical potentialities. *Riverdance*, on the other

hand, is ostensibly a 'work of art' – a critically acclaimed modern dance performance – that is also a commercially successful, mass-produced global product. *Riverdance* is an example of the new Irish 'cultural entrepreneurialism' (O'Connor, B., 1998: 53) – 'artrepreneurialism' perhaps, representing the globalisation and commodification of Irish culture at the same time as preserving some elements of Irish traditional culture and community (albeit in reconstructed and recombined form). As a mass-produced commodity *Riverdance* represents the degradation of the work of art, the loss of art's sacred aura, but at the same time as *Riverdance* is kitsch it retains a valuable utopian moment with political potential. These cultural representations – advertising images and dance performances – capture various dimensions of the Irish experience of globalisation: they appeal to and invoke premodern Celtic culture and/or traditional solidarity at the same time as they exhibit and aspire to ideas of a postmodern, hybridised cosmopolitan culture.

BRANDING IRISH IDENTITY: BALLYGOWAN, GUINNESS AND JAMESON

According to Williamson, 'advertisements are one of the most important cultural factors moulding and reflecting our life today' (1978: 188), and increasingly advertisers are described as 'cultural intermediaries' (Bourdieu, 1984; Featherstone, 1991). Ads tap into collective representations or shared cultural values with regards to identity, community and authenticity. According to O'Boyle, advertising practitioners are somewhat ambivalent about social change; although they ostensibly celebrate cultural change, the Irish advertising industry retains a very closed, limited notion of cultural authenticity when making its ads, due in part to the monocultural constitution of the ad industry (2006: 1). The representation of Ireland as predominantly monocultural is consistent with the assimilationist model of multiculturalism discussed in Chapter 3 that predominates in Ireland today.

Current representations of Ireland as authentic are integrally related to what Jameson calls the postmodern condition, a condition characterised by cultural depthlessness, spiritual exhaustion, fragmentation and scepticism towards utopias (Jameson, 1991). One of the responses to the condition of postmodernity can be seen in the increasing presence of nostalgia in popular culture, which to Jameson is a symptom of our inability to imagine our future. To Roth, nostalgia is 'the excess of desire for the past and a refusal to live in

the present as that time which anticipates the future' (Roth, 1992: 272). One example of how nostalgia is manifested in contemporary global culture is the increasing popularity of all things New Age, a movement which proposes an idealised, nostalgic and utopian representation of the past, the rural, nature, so-called 'primitive cultures' as the sites of wholeness, fulfilment and completeness, and as an antidote to (post)modern cultural schizophrenia and fragmentation (Kuhling, 2004). Thus (post)modern subjectivity is profoundly ambivalent towards the present as it is constituted by western modernity, and is characterised by what Lukacs calls 'transcendental homelessness' whereby we are 'secular, but yearning for the sacred, ironic, but yearning for the absolute, individualistic, but yearning for the wholeness of community, asking questions, but receiving no answers, fragmented, but yearning for imminent totality' (Lukacs, 1971: 189).

As several Irish cultural theorists have noted, this ambivalence is increasingly apparent in Irish society, for rapid social change in Ireland has produced a variety of cultural collisions (Keohane and Kuhling, 2004), a schismatic modernism (Ging, 2002) or schizophrenic Irish modernism (Cronin and O'Connor, 2003). Although this can sometimes result in a 'joyful repudiation … of Irish history as the nightmare from which the young modernist has finally awoken', at other times this results in 'an obsessive engagement with versions of the past in the form of heritage' (Cronin and O'Connor, 2003: 10–11). This obsession with heritage is not simply a characteristic of young Irish urbanites, or what McWilliams (2005: 215) calls the 'Hi-Cos', or the Hibernian Cosmopolitans. Rather, it is a part of the postmodern search for authenticity that characterises all modern societies, and is a factor in high rates of global tourism. Although the relationship between producer and consumer within the tourist relationship is complex, and at times stereotypes can be reconfigured as well as reinforced within the tourist encounter, tourist images of Ireland usually represent Ireland as a metaphysical Other to modernity; as an idealised, premodern rural utopia.

A series of Ballygowan ads running from 2000 to 2004 appeal to the past and to nature and, by association, to a notion of an 'eternal' and pure Irish nature and character to sell their product. These advertising campaigns were a part of a series entitled 'The Power of Purity', a campaign that is perhaps best known for three specific ads entitled the 'Children of Lir', 'The Butterfly' and 'The Chase'. All three of these campaigns invoked Celtic mythology and involved epic, mythical

stories which focus on imageries of primordial struggles between good and evil. As well, the association of Ballygowan water with purity and mist-shrouded landscape hypostatises and reifies Ireland, implying that Irish purity is unsullied by change or time. The underlying theme of all three of these ads in the 'Power of Purity' campaign is the purity and authenticity of the Irish nature – both in terms of the landscape, and the enduring 'Celtic spirit' of its inhabitants. The lush visual imagery of mist-shrouded fields, waterfalls and flowing rivers cements an association between Ballygowan water and what Lash and Urry call 'glacial' or 'evolutionary' time (1994: 242), which refers to the immensely long, gradually changing, evolutionary relationship between human beings and nature, a relationship which evokes a sense of permanence and awe in the face of the perceived eternal and sublime character of nature. As well, through juxtaposing this landscape with Celtic myths portraying epochal struggles, these ads pose the enduring 'Celtic spirit' as flowing through fearless warriors, magic-wielding maidens as an extension of this enduring nature, and thus represent a type of 'glacial' Irishness that is frozen in time. This imagery reinforces a romantic version of Irishness as associated with shared blood ties and a homogenous version of the past such as that apparent in current definitions of citizenship. This romanticised, nostalgic appeal to an outside modernity that is eternal and unchanging is a balm for the fractured and frenetic nature of what Lash and Urry call 'instantaneous time' (1994: 242), or the time of accelerated modernisation and informational capital. This 'glacial time' that is presumed to be a characteristic of nature is used in ads to represent aspects of our supposed nature that are enduring or unchangeable, which operate as wish-fulfilment in the context of the increasingly instrumental relationships that exist amongst people in the context of the fragmentation and so-called flexibilisation of work that has occurred in the wake of increasing capitalist globalisation.

Other ads such as those by Guinness did not rely on the reference to Celtic imagery or the Irish landscape, but nonetheless invoke this 'glacial time' and use sublime images of nature to highlight the significance of the past and to promote a notion of human (and specifically Irish) nature to sell the product. These ads have been successful both outside and inside Ireland. Two of the ads from Guinness's most recent campaign entitled 'Knowing What Is Important' are quite literally set in Antarctic glaciers. One of the ads, entitled 'Tom Crean', draws on a true story of Crean, a native Irish explorer who battled freezing winds in subzero temperatures in an Antarctic expedition to save the life of a fellow explorer in the early

1900s. This ad takes poetic licence in showing how Crean's dream of returning home to County Kerry gave him the strength of will to endure the freezing gales, and shows his face, covered in frost, dreaming of life as a publican and pouring pints of Guinness. Another ad entitled 'Best Mates' tells the story of two penguins against the epic backdrop of the Antarctic landscape who stick together in their battle for survival in the face of avalanches, mountains and a narrow escape from the jaws of a killer whale, and who succeed in their journey in order finally to sit down together in a pub with two pints of Guinness to the musical backdrop of Bing Crosby's 1945 track, 'Accentuate the Positive'. 'The amazing thing about penguins is that when a penguin chooses a mate, a best mate, they stay together for life. No matter what', says the voiceover.

In both stories, the backdrop of Antarctic glaciers is designed to highlight the warmth and sociability of the Irish pub with the cold, harsh climate of the Antarctic terrain, but at another level, the unchanging nature of the Antarctic climate is supposed to be an analogue for the unchanging nature of friendship and the indomitable human spirit. In a different series called 'Good Things Come to Those Who Wait', an ad entitled 'The Surfer' depicts craggy, weather-beaten men waiting for the perfect wave, then surfing to the sound of tribal drumbeats, then hugging on the sand. All of these ads use the age-old strategy of positioning the viewer as the vicarious adventurer, a strategy that Adorno calls the 'intensification of passivity' (1994: 65). However, the agency of the individual is juxtaposed with the eternal, unchanging character of human nature, symbolised as ice or water to connote the triumph of the indomitable human, or in this case male, spirit over nature. In this way, these ads provide a sense of permanence and stability in the context of rapid social change in Ireland (and elsewhere) by looking to the distant past, to glacial time, as a means of counteracting the flux of contemporary life.

In film, literature and popular culture, pubs in Ireland have long been identified as an important resource for the constitution of Irish collective cultural identity, community, solidarity and sociability. Irish sociologists illustrate how the pub is central to Irish sociality and society, and has been closely related to everyday community life (Tovey and Share, 2003), as well as how 'Irishness' is packaged and sold in the global pub industry through images of familiarity, sociability, and through use of Irish holidays (St Patrick's Day), images (i.e. pints of Guinness) and rhetoric ('Best Prices, Lads') (Slater, 2000). The recent Guinness ads appeal to a traditional version of Irish

community and solidarity, which depicts Irish people as an objectified Other who exhibits characteristics such as friendliness, naive charm, honesty, and who is deeply embedded within a premodern, peasant *gemainschaft* world view. As O'Connor (1993) suggests, Irish people are an 'essential ingredient' in Irish tourist marketing because they appear to personify the retreat from modernity that is the objective of many tourist encounters. In another advertisement, after driving to a pub on a remote island in Kerry to the tune of the song 'San Jose', a Guinness rep asks the publican if he's ever been to San Jose, to which the publican responds, 'Sure, that's the back of beyonds!' This ad entitled, appropriately, 'San Jose' explicitly celebrates local parochialism and rejects the values of cosmopolitanism, and poses this rejection as 'charming'. Another ad entitled 'Call Out' shows a Guinness rep driving through the rain to repair draught cellar equipment in a cosy pub in which old and young, male and female (although all are clearly Caucasian) are joined in the mutual excitement that the Guinness equipment has been repaired.

These ads appeal to the non-Irish audience (for both the 'San Jose' and 'Call Out' ads aired in the US, Canada and Japan, amongst other places) as the implicit theme is that if you consume Guinness (which is presented as a potent symbol of Irish nature) you can 're-naturalise' your own character, and 'become' Irish. However, they are targeted at the Irish audience as well, and in particular those who feel themselves becoming too Americanised and internationalised through global culture; they can become more like the Irish of the past, and get back to 'what's important'. These nostalgic, idealised, romanticised representation of Irish life are even more ironic given that Guinness is now owned by Diageo, a global, multinational corporation, that has recently sold off Pillsbury foods and Burger King to focus on its drinks business, and therefore the presumed association with Irish authenticity is even more tenuous than it was when Guinness was entirely Irish-owned, but of course the Guinness/Iveagh family were Anglo-Irish aristocracy who lived in city mansions and neo-Gothic castles, not proprietors of cosy local pubs! Most importantly, however, these ads fail to include any version of Irishness that acknowledges the recent influx of the 'new Irish', and that is not based on ancestry, and thus like so many other aspects of Irish society, they promote a very specific version of authenticity, but one that is not acknowledged. From a poststructuralist perspective, such representations render certain aspects of Irish society (such as the recent increase in ethnic diversity and the influx of visible

minorities) invisible while nostalgically celebrating a homogenous version of Irishness rooted in the past.

BEYOND NOSTALGIA, BEYOND THE OBVIOUS: REPRESENTATIONS OF A COSMOPOLITAN IRELAND?

More recently, the Ballygowan 'Bodies Never Lie' campaign filmed in Prague would appear to symbolise the changing nuances of Irish identity, and the emerging multiethnic, embodied character of Irish society, and would seem to reveal a shift from mythic primordial, epochal imagery to more cosmopolitan, postmodern and hybridised representations of Irish identity. For instance, the 'Bodies Never Lie' campaign includes ballet, hip-hop, reggae, and other types of dance, as well as including individuals from ages 8 to 80, and from various ethnic groups, in urban street settings and in rural fields, performed to the song 'Cosmic Dancer' by T-Rex, a song with mythic undertones by Marc Bolan and T-Rex, metrosexual 1970s London glamrockers, all deliberately un-Irish and resonant with cosmopolitan hybridity. On the one hand, the shift from representing the ads as 'The Power of Purity' to the more hybrid, cosmopolitan 'Bodies Never Lie' campaign illustrates a cultural shift towards cosmopolitan representation of Irishness, and would appear to be a radical break with the past. On the other hand, however, this ad, like all ads, problematically promotes the idea that the image it is portraying (in this case, both health and multiethnicity) can be achieved vicariously through consumption of the product it is trying to sell. This idea that multiculturalism can be achieved through consumption is deeply problematic; for instance, the strategy of changing media images to multiethnic rather than mono-ethnic images has been strongly critiqued. Žižek, for instance, claims that by focusing purely on cultural 'representation' and ignoring economic inequality, and by abstractly embracing 'cultural tolerance' and equal 'respect' for the cultures of affluent and poor nations, 'multiculturalists … depoliticise the issue of representation and paradoxically reproduce a new set of political and economic exclusions' (Žižek, 1999: 218). Jameson also critiques idealised versions of hybridity such as Canclini's dream of 'an immense, global urban, intercultural festival without a centre or even a dominant cultural mode' (Jameson, 2000: 197). Such representations not only do not challenge global political economy that reproduces these structural inequalities, but also serve to reproduce these inequalities by providing the ideological illusion that inequality does not exist.

Moreover, such idealised representations of multiculturalism are not unique to marketing campaigns which have something to sell, but also are a characteristic of Irish multiculturalism policy, which on the one hand is implementing programmes that promote respect for cultural diversity, but on the other hand has a work permit system and a citizenship law that actively promote economic and legal inequalities between individuals on the basis of nationality.

Despite the fact that ads are used to sell a product, however, we would argue that the recent series of Jameson ads from their 'Beyond the Obvious' campaign transcend the limitations of these utopian, harmonious images by providing images that go 'Beyond the Obvious' in terms of our perceptions of ethnicity, and provide images that are slightly jarring, contradictory and provide a potential 'rupture' in the discourse of both racial and ethnic stereotypes, and idealised multiethnicity. One ad, entitled 'The Drummer', shows an elderly Chinese man vigorously playing the drums, which challenges our stereotypes of what elderly Chinese men are like. In their most popular and perhaps controversial ad, 'The Harpist', a mixed-race man with dreadlocks and leather pants walks up to a harp painted green and gold and plays a beautiful melody that turns out to be a prelude to T-Rex's song '20th Century Boy'. This image disrupts taken-for granted binary opposition between tradition/modernity, insider/outsider, Irish/non-Irish, white/non-white, and opens up our minds to an idea of Irishness that is much more fluid, hybrid and produced in dialogue. Bakhtin's (1984) notion of dialogism is useful here in pointing out how culture undergoes 'dialogisation' when it becomes relativised, deprivileged, aware of competing definitions for the same things. In contrast, undialogised language is authoritative or absolute. Through the rhetorical strategy of what Bakhtin calls heteroglossia or polyphony, this ad opens up the concept of 'Irishness' to a dialogue or a conversation amongst multiple voices, and raises the possibility (which is firmly foreclosed in the Guinness ads) that people of African ancestry can create an identity as Irish, that a young black man can engage in a dialogue with Irish traditional music and culture (as symbolised by the harp) where both are mutually transformed, but neither is thoroughly assimilated by the other. Bakhtin reveals the value of 'outsiderness' in a facilitating self-reflexivity and openness in cultures, but in a way that is not oriented purely to assimilating or consuming the Other:

In the realm of culture, outsiderness is a most powerful factor in understanding … We raise new questions for a foreign culture, ones that it did not raise for itself; we seek answers to our own questions in it; and the foreign culture responds to us by revealing to us its new aspects and new semantic depths. Without one's own questions one cannot creatively understand anything other or foreign. Such a dialogic encounter of two cultures does not result in merging or mixing. Each retains its own unity and open totality but they are mutually enriched. (1986: 263)

The juxtaposition of leather and harp, folk music and rock, dreadlocks and green shamrocks constructs culture as fluid, dynamic and in transformation, and break open what tends to be a static, rigid and impermeable understanding of Irish culture as something frozen in the past and hermetically sealed off from active construction by the 'new Irish'. As well, this commercial illustrates how the 'new Irish' can be active producers of culture, rather than passive guests in Ireland, who are given work permits or (if their applications are successful) refugee accommodation, but are not invited to contribute in any way to culture.

In this way, the Jameson 'Beyond the Obvious' ads contain images of polyphonic Irishness, and help us to question why we need multiple and even contradictory voices to overcome the monovocality of Irish society. However, these ads do so in a way that avoids purely representing the Other as merely an extension of ourselves in disguise. As Ging has observed in her analysis of Irish film, we tend to focus on portraying marginalised, gay or ethnic characters in a 'positive' light but what is considered 'positive' or 'normal' is not up for debate (Ging, 2002: 184). Most images of minorities in Ireland today pose them as 'domesticated' Others, presenting them as merely ourselves in disguise. In contrast, the harpist's leather garb and dreadlocks portray him as tough, a bit threatening, and associate him with a somewhat subversive black youth culture, challenging our own biased assumptions about the presumed skin colour of individuals who play the Irish harp. As 'whiteness studies' and intersectional theory have shown us, when the invisibility of 'whiteness' or in this case 'white Irishness' is presumed to be so obvious that it is ignored, we are drowning out polyvocality, difference and heterogeneity. While clearly this image is just an ad designed to sell Jameson whisky, and in this fashion is limited in its intention and scope, it provides an example of how to cultivate a new multiethnic Irish imaginary: by getting 'beyond the obvious' in our conception of culture.

However, 'getting beyond the obvious' can only be fully achieved if immigration, refugee and employment policy are all changed in a way that reduces economic and legal inequalities along race and ethnic lines in Ireland.

The ads for Ballygowan, Guinness and Jameson that we have systematically deconstructed are collective representations of Ireland, aesthetic images that are condensations of contradictory and competing discourses and forces, the collective fears and anxieties, desires and aspirations that animate collective life. These representations exemplify the various paradoxes, contradictions and collisions apparent in the broader society – collisions between local and global, between 'traditional' and 'modern' (or perhaps between premodern and postmodern), between Catholic and secular, and between rural and urban. Similarly, *Riverdance* is a variety of things simultaneously: a representation of premodern Celtic culture and at the same time a postmodern, hybridised cultural product; an instance of the globalisation and commodification of Irish culture as well as its preservation; an example of the degradation of art into commerce, and at the same time of the intimation of a utopian cosmopolitan imaginary.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON *RIVERDANCE*

Riverdance can be seen as a condensation or microcosmic example of a variety of transformations in Irish society and culture, and therefore there are a variety of ways in which the phenomenon of *Riverdance*, and indeed Irish culture and tourism in general, can be interpreted. In this section, we will examine *Riverdance* from the point of view of four theoretical frameworks, and we will identify the strengths and weaknesses of each. The first framework we will look at is that of the neo-Marxist perspective, which would view *Riverdance* as a pure commodity form, as a mass-produced global product cynically created for a homogenised global audience. While this perspective is useful, it does not capture the way in which it has become a source of a positive identity for Irish people. The second perspective we will examine is cultural nationalism, a view that is apparent in some forms of folklore and Irish studies which would view *Riverdance* as 'inauthentic', as a distortion of Irish traditional dance, and as a symptom of a problematic contamination and hybridisation of Irish dance styles. The problem with this viewpoint is that it presents a narrow view of authenticity and perceives tradition as a hermetically sealed, pure entity, a representation that denies the

hybrid history of cultural forms. The third perspective is a social constructionist paradigm which shows how aesthetic forms identified as traditional or authentic are selectively chosen or invented, and how the selection of certain dance repertoires and styles considered to be authentically Irish in the twentieth century were historically in keeping with the needs of the emerging nation state. While this perspective is very helpful in deconstructing overly romantic versions of Irish culture, none of these perspectives outlined above adequately captures how *Riverdance* figures in the libidinal economy of the Irish and the global imaginary, and what positive role it may have in fostering cosmopolitan culture. The last perspective will illustrate how *Riverdance* as a mass-produced work of art is generated by cosmopolitan Irish scenes and retains the potential to express collective desire for a cosmopolitan political imaginary.

A NEO-MARXIST PERSPECTIVE: *RIVERDANCE* AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE COMMODIFICATION AND GLOBALISATION OF IRISH CULTURE

Riverdance is a condensation of many diverse and contradictory discourses. *Riverdance* embodies not only some of the cultural collisions in Irish society, but also some of the more creative and fruitful cultural fusions, and as such is a microcosmic example of some of the most negative and positive dimensions of the social and cultural transformations accompanying the Celtic Tiger economic boom as well as Ireland's cultural renaissance. *Riverdance* is currently Ireland's most popular Irish cultural production, which has led some commentators to argue that its financial success means it is a prime example of the recent acceleration of processes of commodification and globalisation of Irish culture and society (see for instance Slater, 1998: 3). Since the mid-1990s, *Riverdance* has achieved box office success in London, New York, Sydney and Toronto; it has generated media and critical acclaim; its original lead dancers Michael Flatley and Jean Butler now have celebrity status; and it is now seen to be synonymous with Irish dance and, indeed, Irish culture.

From a neo-Marxist perspective, *Riverdance* is an extension of the Irish culture industry or a more generalised kind of 'tourism advertising' (Cronin and O'Connor, 2003: 7) that includes Irish pubs, music, film and other aspects of Irish culture. Seen within this context, *Riverdance* provides a means by which global audiences in North America, Germany, Japan and elsewhere can consume a homogenised, neatly packaged version of authentic Irishness, which

acts as a panacea for postmodern fragmentation, alienation and anomie. From this point of view, one would highlight the role that Irish dance used to perform in community life as an activity that was participatory, spontaneous and performed at special occasions as an integrated community activity. The neo-Marxist perspective would emphasise how *Riverdance* creates a spectacle for mass consumption that functions to further capitalist accumulation. For instance, Ritzer (2004) would view it as an example of the 'McDonaldisation' or 'Disnification' of Irish culture. Adorno's (1994) work on music, astrology and the occult shows how these cultural forms all provide light distraction, wish fulfilment and an intensification of passivity, which serve to divide and decollectivise the individual. Ritzer's critique of the 'McDonaldisation' and 'Disnification' of culture shows how contemporary cultural forms are routinised, homogenised and prepackaged in readily consumable portions. Both provide a way to critique *Riverdance* as a commodity and spectacle, cynically designed to evoke an intimation of Irishness, and a sentimental response within a fragmented, disenfranchised and spiritually vacuous global audience that is in search of authenticity which they nostalgically associate with a romanticised, primitivised, caricaturised, stereotyped version of Irish culture.

To dismiss *Riverdance* as purely an example of the commodification and globalisation of Irish culture, however, is to overlook the extent to which *Riverdance* is a symbol of Ireland's newfound confidence and identity. As O'Connor puts it, 'Riverdance has generally been hailed as one of the signs of a national culture reaching maturity: sufficiently self-confident about our traditional culture to successfully take our place on the global cultural stage' (O'Connor, B., 1998: 60). Because it is both a commercial success and a strong example of a new emerging form of Irish cultural expression characteristic of the Irish cultural renaissance, *Riverdance* is simultaneously an example of Ireland's newfound economic prosperity, and of a new collective cultural identity, and thus is a potent symbol of the new Celtic Tiger.

A Cultural Nationalist Perspective: *Riverdance* and Authenticity

The critique of globalisation and commodification for destroying an authentic Irish culture at times romanticises traditional Irish culture, and overlooks a more phenomenological reading of *Riverdance*, which identifies the source of its popularity. Versions of authenticity often construct a dichotomy between local and global as polar opposites, which overlooks the fluidity between these two and which idealisti-

cally and nostalgically constructs the local as an idyllic site of harmony, community and solidarity, and tends to quarantine cultures in a space outside history (Cronin and O'Connor, 2003: 12). For instance, Irish culture in the immediate post-Independence period has been tremendously critical and subversive; however, some aspects of Irish cinema and literature propagated an image of romantic Ireland as rural pastoral, and more recently the urban pastoral, which presented a romanticised, idealised versions of Irish community and family life. For example, the 1952 film *The Quiet Man* with John Wayne and the literature of Maeve Binchy all propagate a romanticised image of family and community in a rural context that is fundamentally ideologically conservative in implying that economic hardship can be resolved by social solidarity. Similarly, the novels of Roddy Doyle (*The Commitments*, *The Snapper*) are characterised by a kind of 'urban pastoralism' which merely reinscribes such romanticised images of solidarity onto an urban setting. More recently Irish cinema and literature have been characterised by a critical realism, shattering the myths of romantic nostalgic representations of Irish rural life. For instance, *Angela's Ashes* by Frank McCourt presents a gritty, unhappy image of urban poverty, and indirectly exposes the links between colonialism and poverty, prostitution and alcoholism. In some ways, the exuberant, positive representation of *Riverdance* has been perceived as a balm to Irish people, a positive image of youth, energy, athleticism, hybridity and other qualities clearly at odds with both romantic and critical realist traditions.

As well, *Riverdance* has been criticised on the basis that it is inauthentic, and because it transforms some of the conventions of Irish dance in too radical a fashion. The construction of authenticity often creates a dichotomy between local and global which overlooks the fluidity between these two that has been going on for at least several centuries. For instance, many believe the root of tap dancing is actually Irish dancing and, conversely, that *sean nos* dancing of the nineteenth century in Ireland is derivative of Spanish flamenco (Ó Cinnéide, 2002: 25–8). Numerous commentators have shown how *Riverdance*, like other forms of dance, is a hybrid art form that has incorporated many 'foreign' cultural influences since at least the eighteenth century. For instance, Irish dance in general has been strongly influenced by the quadrilles and cotillions of Britain and France originating in the eighteenth century. In choreographic terms, *Riverdance* borrows much from the style of popular American stage and film musicals of the 1920s to the 1950s, and from flamenco,

tap, ballet and other types of dance that have emerged from various European countries (O'Connor, B., 1998: 51). *Riverdance* is a hybrid of traditional and modern, Irish and international elements, which incorporates elements of Eastern European and African musical elements and which uses Spanish flamenco and chorus line dance choreography. In this way, the example of *Riverdance* demonstrates how traditions are invented, and how representations of authenticity that present culture as a hermetically sealed entity overlook often centuries of cultural interplay between local and global.

A Social Constructionist: Dance as Discourse

We argue there are three distinct phases of embodiment in Irish history: the pre-Independence, post-Famine Irish body, either subjugated and starved by imperial power; the post-Independence body, subjugated and subsumed into De Valera's dream of a romantic, unified Ireland; and the contemporary Irish body which is an object of global systems of production/consumption, rendered either an instrument of production in the accumulation of global capital, or an object of global consumerism. These three phases in some ways correspond to types of dance: the rigid step-dancing and resisting *sean nos*, both of which reveal a binary opposition to imperial power; the phase of competitive dancing which corresponds to the nationalist agenda of the post-Independence period; and *Riverdance*. In this way, transformations in dance can be seen as a microcosmic example of some of the transformations in Irish culture and society in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and specifically illustrate the new nationalist agenda upon the formation of the Irish nation state.

Prior to the twentieth century, step-dancing in central areas of Ireland such as Munster was performed in the confined spaces of kitchens, and thus required vertical floor tapping, which required dancing in place, and therefore the rigid, stiff and restrictive posture we now associate with Irish dance (O'Connor, B., 1998: 54). Coinciding with this tradition was a less common tradition called the *sean nos*, *sean* - old, *nos* – way/form, a more wild and raw style of solo dancing which involved vigorous arm movements and finger clicking, a style more prevalent in rural areas of the north and west such as Connemara (Ó Cinnéide, 2002: 33). Though styles were somewhat different between these localities, dance was an integral part of local entertainment in rural life, and was performed both on everyday occasions and for special ritual festivals such as weddings, harvests and on St Stephen's Day. However, upon achieving

Independence in 1922, the emerging Irish nation state set about cultivating a nationalist cultural identity through promoting Irish music and dance competitions, during which time competition dancing (and specifically set dancing) became institutionalised and sponsored by the Irish Dance Commission, which was established in 1927 (Ó Cinnéide, 2002: 33). During this time, Irish musicians and dancers became a national resource for constructing the bases of Irish collective and national identity. Like folklorists, they were used, as Ó Giolláin says, as 'nation-builders who "map" the nation through the project of intensive folklore' (2000: 63). Specifically this meant the cultivation of forms of art consistent with De Valera's version of romantic Ireland whereby nationalist discourses prioritising national development, national identity, family, self-sacrifice, self-sufficiency and nationalism were predominant in Irish political rhetoric and popular ideology. Both the institutionalisation of competitive dance and the Dance Hall Act of 1935, which prohibited small unlicensed Ceile dancing, served to promote a much more panopticonic, regulated version of Irish dancing than ever before, outlawing both *sean nos* and commercial dance hall dancing, and laying down strict rules in relation to teaching practices and standards in an effort to outlaw 'lawless' dancing.

In this way, the increasing regulation of dance can be seen as one strand of the overall project of the cultivation of a civilised, coherent and particularly Irish national populace that many commentators have shown is central to the church and state in the early twentieth century (Peillon, 2002). The transformation of Irish dance in the immediate post-Independence period can be seen in the context of the attempt to 'civilise' the Irish population, to cultivate values of family, self-sacrifice, self-sufficiency, and other characteristics central to the project of nationalism. These characteristics were promoted by Eamon de Valera as part of his vision of a new, independent, romantic Ireland and therefore were central to the project of Irish modernity. Dance has long been a marker of ethnic/national identity for the Irish diaspora (O'Connor, 2003), and as the quintessential example of authentic Irish traditional culture. Ironically, however, this authenticity or tradition was in fact invented or, at the very least, was selectively constructed, for the selection of certain dance repertoires and styles considered to be authentically Irish in the twentieth century were historically in keeping with the needs of the emerging nation state. Achieving nationhood often entails the task of establishing national identity in terms of culture, language and

traditions, and as is often the case in the struggles of decolonising nations, some of these traditions were invented, or were hybridised distortions of former dance types.

The discourse of nationalism, however, converged with the discourse of Catholicism in colonising the Irish body and cultivating a particular kind of Irish dance. Despite the shift from rigid, stiff restrictive postures required for vertical floor tapping in tiny kitchens to more use of horizontal space movements in stage competitions, twentieth-century Irish dance came to be characterised for the most part by a rigid bodily posture. In this transition from local to national setting, costumes shifted from ordinary clothes to bright, ornate costumes with Celtic motifs, lace collars, brooches and medals with a strong emphasis on decoration and embellishment. The presence of a stage also allowed for a greater use of horizontal space, which judges actively encouraged. Though this shift towards a distinctly Irish costume could be interpreted as an attempt to create and construct a coherent Irish collective identity, it was at the expense of deindividual-ising individual bodies. For instance, it has been argued that the dress codes of competitive step-dancing display 'an Irishness which eludes any association with a particular locality or period' (Breathnach, 1983: 49). To O'Connor, these costumes connote an 'abstract and anodyne Irishness which [has] the effect of hiding the body by attracting the eye to the interlaced Celtic motifs, Tara brooches, lace collars, and medals on the dancer's costumes' (O'Connor, B., 1998: 57). In a sense the semiotics of this dance costume illustrate the way in which the post-Independence Irish body was desexualised and deindividualised in order for it to be subsumed or incorporated into the nationalist cause; for in this form of embodiment dance was more regimented than in pre-Independence Ireland, but all forms of embodiment and agency were still under the scrutiny of the regulatory apparatus of the Catholic nationalist state. As such, particular styles of dance both reflect and reproduce the social and cultural environments in which dance events occur (O'Connor, B., 1998: 53). The way in which the competitive dance dress code also has the effect of hiding and, in effect, desexualising the body was perfectly consistent with the repressive, puritanical and patriarchal Catholic ethos of the time, which was central to the particular way in which reproduction was curtailed in Ireland in order to achieve a certain standard of living. As many commentators have noted, Ireland in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has had a unique demographic pattern, labelled 'Irish exceptionalism', of postponed marriages, high rates

of fertility within marriage, high rates of celibacy and low rates of extramarital births. According to Inglis (1998), this control of reproduction achieved through the repressive moral regulation of sexuality by the Catholic church was crucial to maintaining a decent standard of living in the post-Famine context of scarcity of land, but left a strong legacy of sexual repression at the core of Irish culture and identity. Inglis shows us very precisely the swarming disciplinary mechanisms that have acted historically in the construction of Irish sexuality and the Irish body, and how the most fateful force has been the agency of the institutional apparatus of the Irish Catholic church, its privileged relationship with the state in shaping legislation and publication in general, and in the administration of education and health services in particular. Despite evidence that contemporary sexual practices and mores have changed a great deal since the time when classic ethnographic studies equated Irish sexuality with sexual Puritanism (for instance in studies by Arensberg and Kimball (1968), Messenger (1969), Brody (1973) and Scheper-Hughes (2001)) Inglis shows how the legacy of Irish Catholic sexual morality persists in contemporary Irish culture even today.

In contrast to the rigidity of officially sanctioned versions of Irish dance, *Riverdance* is a deliberately hybridised product that further incorporates more dramatic horizontal movement (associated with non-Irish dance) with vertical movement (associated with Irish dance). For instance, O'Connor notes that Michael Flatley combines expansive horizontal movement in dramatic, extravagant leaps and jumps (that seem almost to mock the rigidity of rural dance of the eighteenth century), with the classical, vertical movements of traditional Irish dance (O'Connor, B., 1998: 57). As well as involving a more liberated use of horizontal space, *Riverdance* illustrates a shift towards a more liberated approach to the body, for *Riverdance* costumes are much more showy and provocative than previous dancing costumes, incorporating eye-catching, body-hugging materials, short skirts and tight shirts designed subtly to sexualise the bodies of the dancers and subject them to the audiences' gaze (O'Connor, B., 1998: 57). This is not to say that sexual repression, moral regulation and governance are unique to Ireland and, for instance, are absent in America, where lead dancers Michael Flatley and Jean Butler are from, or that sexualisation of bodies is always a good thing. As Steedman points out, the discourse of sexual liberation in the US is itself deeply problematic for configuring sexuality in a way that renders women vulnerable to sexual exploitation, and for

discursively constructing monogamous heterosexual genital sexuality and orgasmic functioning as the goal of sexuality in a fetishistic, single-minded fashion (Steedman, 1986). Rather, moral regulation of sexuality, whether in the US or Ireland, is a highly generalised form of power pervasive in modern society, and is the site of ambivalent and competing hegemonic articulatory discourses. However, the shift from the repressive, rigid postures and drab and concealing costumes of both pre- and post-Independence dance forms to the more free-wheeling and sexualised postures and costumes adopted in *Riverdance* is often interpreted as a metaphorical example of the recent liberalisation of Ireland. In this way, criticisms that *Riverdance* is inauthentic, and that it represents a problematic distortion or reinterpretation of Irish identity, sexuality and tradition, miss the key point that identity, sexuality and tradition are themselves discursively constructed. As well, the uncritical celebration of traditional Irish society that sometimes informs this authentic/inauthentic dichotomy often masks an insular, nostalgic appeal to the 'good old days', and a politically conservative orientation, and ignores the extent to which collective cultural identity has in some ways borne the imprint of psychopathologies of colonialism (Moane, 2002: 120).

Riverdance as Art in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction: The Scenes of Cosmopolitan Creativity

To get a handle on the success of *Riverdance*, and on what it might tell us about the relationship between culture and economy, we need to formulate that social space which exists at the zones of intersection and liminal interfaces between the indigenous and the cosmopolitan, the local and the global, the traditional and the modern. It is at these interfaces that we can begin to identify the 'scene(s)' of artre-preneurship. To explore and analyse this we will draw on three conceptual frameworks, namely: (a) the phenomenology of the scene, as developed by Blum (2003) in his analysis of the imaginative structure of the city; (b) the structure of the experience of liminality and its role in creativity, which is analogous to the structure of a *rite de passage* as analysed by anthropologists van Gennep (1961) and Turner (1969); and (c) the character of art and performance under modern conditions of mass production and mass consumption, in particular the loss – and partial retention – of the sacred aura of the work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction (Benjamin, 1992c).

Creative scenes are liminal time/space situations, characterised by flux and uncertainty, occasioned by large-scale historical and

demographic changes and collective events and experiences, such as war, colonisation, economic migration and globalisation, whereby large numbers of people – a whole generation, or sizeable numbers of a generation – find themselves disembedded from their traditional milieus, spatially and temporally uprooted, and thrown and/or drawn together in new combinations and configurations whereby previously fixed identities and social relations become undone, new elements come together and new interfaces and synergies become possible. The London Irish scene Moya Doherty describes in the 1980s as crucial to the emergence of *Riverdance*[1] is such a scene (a scene, incidentally, that previously had generated England's New Wave music and culture, amongst them Johnny Rotten, Elvis Costello, Boy George and Morrissey – emigrants, or the children of emigrants, from small-town Ireland).[2] In such scenes, as well as the artists, performers and individual talents, a crucial role is played by the impresario: a wheeler-dealer, a fixer who brings people together, makes introductions; often a publican or someone who's got a venue they're looking to fill. The history of the culture industry is richly populated by such personalities as Colonel Tom Parker and Malcolm McLaren.

The experience of being a part of such a scene has a particular structure. This structure is closely analogous to what anthropology has analysed in terms of a *rite de passage*. A *rite de passage* is structured in three phases, as follows: first, a stage of separation, wherein participants are disconnected from their usual milieu and its customary practices and are removed to a place apart from the parental context. Here, this corresponds exactly with the experience of emigration – from family and locale in Ireland, to exile in the metropolis. Second, there is a loss, or discarding, or sloughing off, of previously existing identity. Participants in the *rite de passage* experience 'anti-structure' – destabilisation, fragmentation and chaos – that is bewildering and frightening, but is also characterised by a sense of *communitas* – belonging, togetherness – and a quasi-religious collective effervescence. Participants in the *rite de passage* are rendered open – *agape* – to transcendence and spiritual awakening. This corresponds with the experience of metropolitan life – the experience of 'shock' (Baudelaire, 1972; see Benjamin, 1992d: 173), the 'intensification of nervous stimulation' (Simmel, 1971a: 325), hyper-individuation and anomie on the one hand, and, simultaneously, the sense of belonging, of participating in the collective life of the great city, and the imperative which the experience of anti-structure and dissolution places on constructing and maintaining a new identity (Simmel, 1971a:

324). Third, there is a phase of reintegration, wherein participants in the *rite de passage* undergo transformation and metamorphosis, and emerge through the scene (*rite de passage)* with a new identity. This new identity is composed of elements, practices and signifiers accumulated from the chaos of the scene, some transcendent (in the sense, at least, of their having been brought into the scene from other cultures, other times and places), some mundane (in the sense of skills, practices and habits developed during the experience) and these are combined with older elements originally brought from prior contexts but transfigured by the flux of the scene. This new identity and its practices and expressions are then brought home and reintegrated with the parental society, reinvigorating and renewing its collective life. Throughout the *rite de passage*, but especially significant in this phase, is the role of the M.C. – the Master of Ceremonies – who guides, conducts and choreographs the participants through the experience, and who eventually 'brings home' and unveils the children of the tribe who have been to the fields of Elysium and who have been touched by the sacred fire. This corresponds exactly with the work of an artrepreneur – producer – *Riverdance*'s Moya Doherty and the exuberant, triumphant performance of her troupe.

Riverdance is often identified with the birth of the Celtic Tiger in Ireland in the mid-1990s, but it was conceived someplace else, during the course of an intense affair, and spent several years in gestation before its home birth back in small-town Ireland. And, of course, the birth of the Celtic Tiger is in fact a *rebirth*, a renaissance, Ireland born again as it were. The scene of the intense affair and conception is the Irish scenes in London and New York, and more particularly the Irish artsy, bohemian scenes where expatriate artists, writers, actors, musicians and dancers worked and mingled with one another and with their cosmopolitan counterparts who had also found themselves washed up together in the world's metropolis by the ebb and flood of globalisation; and, in Ireland, the artsy scenes in Dublin and Galway. Galway is especially interesting, as, since the earlier Irish cultural renaissance at the turn of the twentieth century, cosmopolitan intellectuals such as Synge, Yeats and Joyce oriented to Galway, that place outside of the modern imperial-colonial centre, as the locus of the authentic, the heartland, the real Ireland: the source from which culture could be reborn. But, having said that, then, as now, the artistic scene in Galway was not the flag-stoned floors of country kitchens in thatched cabins on windswept Aran or mountainy Connemara. (Artists and cosmopolitan intellectuals, like

anthropologists, enjoy their comforts, and spend little time really in the field.) The artistic scene is to be found in the convivial pubs and taverns of Galway's Shop St, Cross St and Quay St, a bohemian, cosmopolitan quarter running from the city centre down to Spanish Arch and the harbour, to the impoverished Irish-speaking ghetto of the Claddagh where peasants squatted at the edge of the city; like Barcelona's Ramblas, a mixed, sometimes seedy area of porters and prostitutes, sailors and students on the spree, given to revelry, music, dance and carnival. Actors and playwrights and their audiences and *aficionados* hang out before and after performances, and musicians play impromptu gigs and sessions. These scenes, whether in New York, London or Galway become institutionalised over time, with regular sessions in the usual places, frequented by central 'characters' and 'personalities', while retaining, to a greater or lesser extent, their vibrancy, fluidity and mobility.[3]

Exotic creatures such as Celtic Tigers and Riverdancers are conceived in these colourful scenes, not in the grey landscapes of rural backwardness or (post)-industrial drabness; but the energy and fecundity of these scenes is derived from the collisions and fusions of different, often opposed worlds: rural and urban, parochial and metropolitan, provincial and cosmopolitan, traditional and modern, local and global. Here, in the midst of this flux, old conventions and identities become loosened and new cultural elements, signs and meanings are encountered in a spirit of collective effervescence and mutual fascination and recognition. This is the creative scene, a scene it should be noted that, like the primitive *rite de passage*, is frequently naively romanticised. For while it has the potential to generate art and cosmopolitan culture, it is a volatile, even dangerous scene, with equal potential for violence and self-destruction. Promising talents frequently succumb to the delirium of the scene and are consumed by the Dionysian spirit, and even many who make it burn out spectacularly: Lou Reed, a bright light of Greenwich Village and Andy Warhol's 'Factory'; or homegrown examples, from *Riverdance*'s London-Irish generation, Shane McGowan, and from Galway's bohemia, Dolores Kane.

Scene and Spectacle

Formulating the scene through a phenomenology of the creative city, Blum draws attention to the 'sacred' character of scenes, the aura of mystery and ineffability that surrounds them, and the fragility that pertains to them:

There is an esoteric aura connected with any scene that often makes knowledge of its whereabouts a problem for outsiders or for those new to the city. That the location of the scene is problematic is linked not only to the specialized knowledge required of those who orientate to it but to the idea that the delicacy of such knowledge requires a degree of insulation from profane influences. The scene often appears sacred because interests that do not engage it with the gravity it thinks it requires could interrupt the practices it cultivates. (2003: 167)

Galway's arts scene in the 1980s, for example, centred around a small number of urban spaces, including the Druid Theatre, Naughton's bar, Kenny's bookstore and gallery, and a cluster of cafes; regular venues for actors, writers and musicians who formed the core of what was to become the Galway Arts Festival, now in its 25th year and worth tens of millions in annual revenues. But the scene's success threatens the integrity and sustainability of the scene. Dilettantes and hangers-on, symbiotic with the scene, may become parasitic on the scene as their volume swells, and to protect its integrity the scene moves to places that are 'not-scene', and transforms them. As Naughton's became crowded with culture vultures and tourists the scene decamped to Brennan's, an innocuous dockside bar, quite unused, and initially quite uneasy with such a clientele. Amongst the local legends of Galway's bohemia is the story of how a world famous blues/rock artist, a man with a reputation for perfectionism that borders on the precious, who meticulously controls every performance, totally out of character late one night in Brennan's began to sing. The publican interrupted, declaring, 'there's no singing in this bar!' 'But', everyone gasped, 'That's "The Man"!' 'I don't care who he is', said the publican. 'There's no singing, and that's that!' The publican's naive interjection became legendary because it was seen as a sign confirming the uniqueness of this particular space and time: this is 'Old Galway'; a place apart, cut off and immune from modernity and metropolitan influences. Places where the scene convenes thus become sacred spaces, but frequently find that as their cult value becomes greatly enhanced they risk degradation and profanity. The Quays, a small, rough pub adjacent to the Druid Theatre, quickly became a super-pub, in fact the prototype simulacrum of the international Irish pub, Ireland's ubiquitous contribution to the culture of globalisation. As Galway real estate values increased over ten-fold in as many years, Kenny's sold their famous bookstore and gallery for redevelopment by a high-street shopping chain and continue

their book trade online; Brennan's bar was demolished to make way for harbourfront condos, and Taylor's, an offbeat venue and haunt of alcoholic session musicians, degenerated further, and is now a lap-dancing club.

Colourful scenes, whether they be in London, New York or Galway, are an essential element of the modern city, so much so in fact that they are virtually synonymous – imagine a city without such scenes, and it is no longer a city worthy of the name! (Blum, 2003: 166). Galway's artsy-bohemian-cosmopolitan scene is such that according to one of Ireland's leading economic analysts, John Fitzgerald of the Economic and Social Research Institute, economic development agencies find it especially easy to attract global foreign direct investment to Galway, as their high-flying key personnel, used to the vibrancy and cosmopolitanism of San Francisco, New York and Tokyo, don't feel that they are trading down being relocated to Galway for a while, as they would in any other Irish city, including Dublin. The artsy scene is essential to the spectacle of the city – Broadway, the West End – but these are massified kitsch, for middle-brows and small-town tourists in the big city for the weekend: a cosmopolitan eye will be drawn to the real thing; 'where it's really happening', a scene decidedly 'off Broadway', even though, ironically, the spectacle of cultural creation, the 'primal scene' of culture, so to speak, may eventually make it to Broadway. This is the story of *Riverdance*, and of every artistic success story: its origins are obscure, somewhat *ob-scene* even, but in the end it risks another kind of obscenity – a Baudrillardian (1983) obscenity of the spectacle of mass culture where, like the work of art in an age of mechanical reproduction, *Riverdance* risks losing its aura and devolving to culture industry mass-produced kitsch – the 'Vegas years' of talented artists. But, for the moment, we are interested in the period of success before it has gone to seed, the high performance halcyon days before decadence.

Surrounding the scene, at its frequent moments of liminality, is a sense of *communitas* (Turner, 1967), a collective effervescence (Durkheim, 1995) that is quasi-religious in that participants in the scene feel that they belong to something special; a scene that promises to transform itself into something even better again; a scene that hovers on the threshold of transcendence. This is the creative genius of the scene – the promise it holds out to elevate talented individuals to another realm, another plane of being. The transcendent plane of the spirits invoked in the primitive ritual and *rite de passage* finds its contemporary, secular equivalent in the evocation of fame and

celebrity – the realm of the stars. The promise of transcendence is the mysterious gravitational force of the scene that keeps *dilettantes* in rapture and spectators dazzled, amazed and coming back for more. The spectacle generated by the scene – both the scene itself as a spectacle and the aesthetic objects generated by the scene: the drama, the style, the works of art, in this case the music and the dance – depends upon the mutually fascinated gaze shared between performance and spectators. This mutually fascinated gaze, the reciprocal, recursive exchange of desire and recognition circulating around the fantasy generated by the scene and its aesthetic objects, is the libidinal economy that underpins the political economy of the city. This economy of desire floats and buoys the box office receipts and the busy tills of the city's bars and cafes, the culture and entertainment industries.

But the libidinal economy and the aesthetic object(s) upon which the liveliness of the scene depends and from which it derives its energy are subject to processes that threaten to deplete its resources. The aesthetic object – in this case *Riverdance* – is a work of art subject to mechanical reproduction – multiple troupes, individual performers trained and standardised to the point of homogenisation, touring globally for over ten years; copies and spin-offs, video and digital recordings reproduced in tens of millions. Why has *Riverdance* not already devolved to *Cats* or some similar asinine clone of Lloyd-Webber or McDisney (or has it)? Why do audiences keep on coming back for more?

Fetish, Aura and Fantasy

A work of art, according to Walter Benjamin, contains both cult value and exhibition value. All art originates in religion. 'Artistic production begins with ceremonial objects designed to serve in a cult' (Benjamin, 1992c: 218). Fetishes, music and dance are made to represent and to address the transcendent and the metaphysical. And just as works of art are attempts to address the transcendental, they simultaneously, inadvertently, disclose the real – the unrepresentablity of the absolute. This is the source of their fascination and their sacred aura. Gradually, progressively, over the course of history, exhibition value supersedes and supplants cult value, and the work of art becomes disembedded from its place in magic, religion and tradition, and its aura withers. But as 'the technique of reproduction detaches the reproduced object from the domain of tradition' (Benjamin, 1992c: 215) it also 'enables the original to meet the beholder halfway' (Benjamin, 1992c: 214)

and thus, even though the work of art has suffered being profaned, its aura faded, its relation to the transcendental and the sacred can be 'reactivated', and on a mass scale. The net result of the mass reproduction and circulation of the work of art, Benjamin says, is 'a tremendous shattering of tradition … the destructive, cathartic, liquidation of the traditional value of the cultural heritage', the condition of possibility, Benjamin argues, for creativity, innovation and cultural revolution (1992c: 215). Art, according to Benjamin, 'ceases to be based upon ritual, and begins to be based on another practice – politics' (Benjamin, 1992c: 218).

When the work of art is subject to mechanical reproduction it risks the loss of its aura of the sacred and becomes a mere commodity, circulating in the marketplace with countless others, ultimately differentiated only by their price. But this is not quite true, and this is the source of the ambivalence towards the culture industry that Benjamin (1992c) expresses in his famous essay. Commodified art, mass-produced and circulated by the artrepreneur, seldom becomes depleted to the point of becoming inert matter. Even the blandest mass-produced art always retains a trace of cult value and its quality as fetish – it is invested with desire and configured in fantasy. And this transcendental moment can be reactivated. This is arguably especially so in the case of the live performance of music and dance. The commodity fetish, in Benjamin's elaboration of Marx's theory of the commodity, contains, or stands in the place of, a void: an existential void at the deep interior of the secular-rational, hyper-individuated Enlightenment subject, a void the modern subject replicates in everything it produces. The deep secret of the success of the system of production and exchange of commodities – modern producer-consumer capitalist society – is a self-perpetuating, endless, hysterical cycle whereby existentially empty subjects produce empty commodity fetishes into which they project fantasies to fulfil their desire for wholeness, which inevitably turn out to be inadequate to satisfy their desire, forcing them to turn to another fetish, and then another, and so on.

In Benjamin's terms the dialectical, potentially revolutionary secret of the work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction is that it retains a trace of its aura, so that when circulated to a mass audience by the culture industry, it bears, however faintly but indelibly, a trace of the promise of transcendence, of the transformation of the mundane, empty reality of consumer society and reorients modern society towards higher ideals. This is the key to the fascination with

the spectacle of the aesthetic object: like any other artrepreneurial object *Riverdance* loses its aura, though not completely; it retains what Lacan (1978: 268) calls 'a little piece of the Real', an element or moment in which we glimpse (or perhaps we only imagine that we glimpse) what seems to be the authentic, the pure, the real – the true, the beautiful and the good. This is the utopian moment in which the spectator or the audience enters into the world represented in the painting by a great artist or writer, or finds themselves transported, transformed or emotionally completely turned around by a piece of music. These moments are exceedingly rare, and are reserved for encounters with Rembrandt, Shakespeare or Beethoven, the work of artistic genius that can survive being processed by the culture industry better than most. The artistic work of Yeats, Joyce and Beckett are in this league, arguably, but *Riverdance*? Not so much!

Riverdance, *Reality and the Real*

And yet, *Riverdance* brings millions of spectators to their feet, waves of rapturous applause, cheering, weeping, hysteria …! That *Riverdance* retains a bigger, as it were, 'little piece of the Real' (and not just for the Irish) needs explaining. When audiences leap to their feet, straining forward to see better (as, apparently *Riverdance* audiences are prone to do from Vienna to Vancouver), what is it that they are straining to see or to hear? What have they caught a glimpse of that they want to see even better? Is it that they see the real – real, authentic, genuine, Irish culture; a fleeting glimpse of the Celtic spirit? Perhaps, though if they do it is mostly the residual tracings of a palimpsest, washed out and washed through waves of emigration to England and America, an invented tradition, a thoroughly metropolitanised and modernised cultural product, as carefully packaged and cleverly marketed as a six-pack of Budweiser. They see past all of that perhaps – at least some of them do – but they want to see more than that too. 'More! More! *Encore! Encore*!' That which lacks is in *béance*, Lacan says. It calls out, for more. *Riverdance*, like all commodities, even, and perhaps especially, the spectacular commodities produced by the artrepreneur, is invested with desires and filled out with the fantasies of the consumer/spectator/audience in a mutually fascinated gaze that constitutes the scene of live performance. In the context of the ongoing disenchantment of the world, and its flip-side – amplified desire for re-enchantment as we are haunted by 'the ghosts of our dead religious beliefs' (Weber, 1976: 182) combined with the accelerating process of globalisation, wherein the great patrimony of the world's

cultural, linguistic and musical heritage is homogenised, processed, commodified and circulated hysterically, those things that appear to be real, or at least more real than others, or those things that can be made to appear really real – absolutely authentic fakes, as Umberto Eco calls them – become all the more precious and valuable. In this context it is clear that 'by the little that now satisfies the Spirit we can measure the extent of its loss' (Hegel, 1997: 5). An artrepreneur who can dip into reservoirs of culture or, as is the case in this instance, who can reassemble elements of culture disassembled and thrown into flux in bohemian and artsy urban scenes of globalisation, and produce a *bricolage* overdetermined with signs of the real, has in fact produced the only commodity that is really scarce in the hyper-reality of global consumer society: the miracle cure – the serotonin supplement for the melancholy of globalisation; the existential Alka Seltzer that gives us relief from the nausea of the perpetual return of the real.

CONCLUSION

The diverse and antagonistic character of the transformations that have accompanied Ireland's experience of globalisation have produced a variety of cultural and social collisions between different, and often incompatible, forms of life; collisions between local and global are often understood as tensions between traditional and modern (or perhaps between traditional and postmodern), between Catholic and secular, and between rural and urban, experienced as binary opposites, but which are intimately interconnected in complex and fluid ways. In dominant discussions of the cosmopolitanisation of Ireland, there is a tendency to conflate the global with the negative and the local with the positive, or vice versa, without examining how the new cosmopolitan Ireland contains positive and negative elements of each. *Riverdance* is an example of both the negative and the positive aspects of the economic, political, social and cultural transformations. The phenomenon of *Riverdance* is a variety of things simultaneously: it is a representation of premodern Celtic culture at the same time as it is illustrative of a postmodern, hybridised cultural product. It is also an example of the new wave of Irish 'cultural entrepreneurialism' (O'Connor, B., 1998); of the hybridisation of Irish culture, amalgamating elements of tradition and modernity, local and global, which exemplifies the current cultural trend towards revival of traditional art forms in Ireland and elsewhere that in some ways contests cultural globalisation and cultural homogenisation.

Riverdance is both a refreshing example of emerging new hybrid forms of fusion and cosmopolitan culture emerging from Ireland in recent years, and a massive industry that has crowded out more local, autonomous dance forms, an example of the intrusion of the commodity form into all aspects of life. The question for the future is whether or not Irish culture can withstand the encroachment of neo-liberalism in Ireland, and can preserve the best elements of tradition, and identity, however invented or hybridised in the reconfigured landscape of neoliberal globalisation.

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Part 3

Globalisation and Quality of Life in Ireland

5
Depression:
The Melancholy Spirit of the Celtic Tiger

Orienting Questions

- Does economic success lead to happiness?
- Why is depression epidemic in contemporary society?
- What is the relationship between the experience of social transformation and wellbeing?
- How is the experience of accelerated social change also characterised by stasis?
- What is meant by 'quality of life' and 'wellbeing'?

Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1603) is a brilliant study of the symptoms and the sources of melancholy (depression), which was epidemic in late Elizabethan England, as it is in Ireland today. Currently some 300,000 Irish people out of a population of 4 million are medicated for depression, the tip of the iceberg, as it is an under-diagnosed condition.[1] Depression is presently understood in terms of a cluster of related issues and symptoms – a syndrome – an emotional state as much as a physiological condition, but no less debilitating for that and requiring sustained medical intervention.[2] Shakespeare's audience readily identified with Hamlet, as they themselves were all too familiar with the problem of melancholia. Melancholia was so widespread that it was said to be the characteristic humour of Elizabethan society, as portrayed in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1990 [1632]). This chapter will describe how the related problem of binge drinking in contemporary Ireland corresponds with the prevalence of drunkenness that gave rise to the ambivalent moniker of 'merrie England'.

'SOMETHING IS ROTTEN IN THE STATE OF IRELAND': THE MELANCHOLY OF GLOBALISATION

Ireland is presently the world's most globalised society, undergoing accelerated and intensive modernisation and structural transforma-

tion. One of the western world's most youthful societies, 40 per cent of the population are under the age of 25, an affluent, educated generation with almost full employment, experiencing enormously expanded economic opportunities and moral horizons. But equally a troubled generation, with soaring rates of suicide, deliberate self-harm, alcoholism, substance abuse and depression. Hamlet could be Irish. He is a young man who's got everything going for him. He is a Prince, heir to the throne. In the meantime, he's away at university. He's got a steady girlfriend at home, the beautiful Ophelia, as well as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, 'the lads' as he calls them himself. But Hamlet is depressed and deeply troubled. Shortly after his father's sudden death his mother has hooked up with his uncle. As well as grieving for his father, Hamlet is suspicious and paranoid. His father's ghost who, through dreams and hallucinations, seems to confirm Hamlet's suspicion that his uncle is a villain who murdered his father, seduced his mother and usurped the throne haunts him. His mother and his friends are worried about the state of his mental health. They try to cheer him up. Against her father's wishes Ophelia tries to talk to him, but Hamlet tells her to forget about it and to 'get to a nunnery'. His mother and his uncle have his old pals stop by. They engage in the timeless exchange of young men: 'Hey Hamlet, how's it going?' 'Good lads! What's up?' 'The lads' tell Hamlet they're 'not too bad at all sure'. They are neither 'the button on Fortune's very cap, nor the soles of her shoes, but live about the middle of her favour' – in fortune's knickers, as it were. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are lively, vulgar young tigers, happy beneficiaries of the new state of affairs. But they are also smug lackeys whom Hamlet learns to trust no more than 'adders fanged'. Hamlet runs with their jovial, ribald line of chatter for a bit, but quickly turns the conversation to his own preoccupations. 'Denmark's a prison', he says. At least, that's how it appears to him, and the lads being sent to cheer him up cannot alleviate his deep melancholy:

I have of late, but wherefore I know not, lost all my mirth and foregone all custom of exercise; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy the air, look you, this brave overhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire: why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. (II, ii: 18–26)

Hamlet's depression is such that he contemplates suicide – 'to be, or not to be, that is the question' – but his suicidal thoughts

are at odds with his desire to get to the bottom of what is rotten in Denmark. His moods wax and wane. No sooner has he resolved upon a course of action then, as he says, his 'conscience makes a coward of him' (III, i: 7; 2–3). He feels powerless and immobilised; furiously angry, and then inert; witty and joking, then sullen; belligerent, and then incandescent with rage and sarcasm. Hamlet's account of his melancholy, his 'depression' we would call it today, runs counter to the official line of the Court. The Queen and the new King are happy, the royal house and the affairs of state are in good order, they say, and Denmark's relations and ventures in Norway, France and England are going well. Hamlet must be mad (and perhaps he is) but, as Freud tells us, 'to be sane in a sick society is to be sick relative to the society' (1961: 89). Hamlet may be paranoid and delusional, but just because he is paranoid, it doesn't mean that they're not out to get him. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark, and Hamlet's obsession with it threatens to unravel the tapestry of the new regime. His uncle and his friends plot to have him silenced, permanently.

DON'T WORRY. BE HAPPY!

As in Hamlet's Denmark, the official line in Ireland today is 'cheerfulness'. We're all doing very well: economic success, affluence, rising standards of living – we've never had it so good. In November 2004 the EIU published the findings of a survey measuring the quality of life in 111 countries, finding that the Republic of Ireland is the happiest society in the world. Using a matrix of indices including health, life expectancy, political freedom, unemployment, climate, political stability, security, gender equality, community and family life, Ireland scored 8.33 points out of 10, followed by Switzerland and then Norway, with the US 13th and the UK trailing in 29th position. 'Ireland wins', according to the EIU, 'because it successfully combines the most desirable elements of the new – the fourth highest gross domestic product per head in the world in 2005, low unemployment, political liberties – with the preservation of certain cosy elements of the old, such as stable family and community life' (EIU, 2004: 4). Elaborating on the reasons for Ireland's high ranking, the EIU explain that the rankings of wealthier countries were 'pulled down by poor scores in community and family measures. Increasing affluence had been marked by a breakdown of traditional institutions, and a rise in drug use, crime and alcohol addiction.' The UK's 29th rank, for example, is 'attributed to high rates of social and family breakdown'.

In stark contrast, Ireland is 'a society where communal values are treasured and upheld' (EIU, 2004: 4).

We are so happy, purportedly, because while we have all the advantages of the new – affluence, economic and cultural liberalism (the rewards delivered by globalisation and the neoliberal configuration) – we have retained the best of the old – continuity with the past, family, friends and community. This is exactly how Claudius and Gertrude, the new King and Hamlet's mother, the Queen, try to reassure Hamlet: 'Cheer up', they say. 'Things have changed, and change may be a little rough, but don't worry. Be happy! The important things are the same as they've always been. Everything will turn out just fine.' 'Good Hamlet', says his mother, 'cast thy nightly colour off, and let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark' (I, ii: 24). We treasure family values and old friends, she tells him. Please stay home and be happy with us. Claudius cajoles him: 'don't dwell on the past. Change is natural and inevitable. Pull yourself together. Don't be unreasonable and impatient. I'll be your father from now on. You'll be king yourself one day' (I, ii: 25 passim). But Hamlet is not placated. Corruption in the golden circle of the Court is a contagious disease that spreads throughout the body politic. Like the Irish today, ordinary Danes, Hamlet says, are given over to wild carousing, binge drinking and debauchery; a 'heavy headed revel east and west' that is 'swinish' and 'takes from our achievements' (I, iv: 17–21). The imagery of sickness and contagion infects the whole drama. The bright and sunny days of affluence and success, rather than alleviating the sources of melancholy, serve to further the rot. 'The sun breeds maggots in dead dogs' (II, ii: 5) Hamlet observes.

Even people who have good reason to be pleased with the findings of the EIU survey are somewhat sceptical. Paul McDonnell, cofounder of the Dublin-based neoliberal think-tank the Open Republic Institute, sounds a cautionary note, explaining economic success in terms of Ireland's having the lowest rate of corporate tax in Europe (leading to relative under-spending and under-resourcing on health, education and social security). Furthermore, he suggests that Irish people surveyed may have reported being happy because, coming from relative poverty and underdevelopment, our levels of expectation of quality of life are low to begin with.[3] Former Justice Minister John O'Donoghue also sounded a note of doubt, complaining of a 'rip-off' culture, extortionate prices and spiralling debt. A standard semi-detached house in the Dublin area starts at €360,000, by far the highest price in the EU. Ten years ago a mortgage was one and a

half times the average salary. It is currently five and a half times that. Ireland may be the world's most globalised society and be amongst the best countries in the world to do business in, as a World Bank report announced in the same month as the EIU survey, but it is the second most unequal society in the OECD and the most individually indebted society in the western world.

And whatever reservations some may have regarding the supposed robust health of Ireland's political economy, there is little doubt that there is a widespread and generalised unease about the health of our collective social and bodies politic. Even during economic boom – 'in the fatness of these pursy times', in Hamlet's words, there is a sense of unease. The King frets how 'the people [are] muddied, thick and unwholesome in their thoughts' (IV, v: 15). Whisper and gossip abounds in Denmark, eroding public confidence and threatening stability. The public need reassurance that all is well. The EIU survey is about providing that reassurance. But as we shall see, pronouncements from senior politicians serve to exacerbate misgivings rather than assuage them.

THE GHOST OF THE FATHER AND THE SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY

Immediately after the announcement of the EIU quality of life survey, the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaelteacht Affairs, Eamonn O'Cuiv, grandson of the Father of the Nation, Eamonn de Valera, was involved in a serious collision while driving on the N22 between Killarney and Kenmare.[4] Speaking shortly afterwards, the minister uses the tragedy of the collision (which resulted in death and serious injury for the occupants of the other vehicle) to confirm the good news that Ireland is the world's happiest country. Dev's grandson's near-death experience enabled him to glimpse the spirit of community that animated traditional Ireland, rumours of whose death have been circulating of late. Indeed, Prime Minister Bertie Ahern, who has overseen Ireland's globalisation and neoliberal restructuring, is an avid reader of Putnam's *Bowling Alone* (2000), which he has said is 'on my bedside table'. The spectre of dead community seemingly causes him some sleepless nights!

Assuaging any doubts we may have about the spiritual health of the nation, the minister assures us that Ireland's traditional spirit of community is alive and well. He has seen it with his own eyes: 'The generosity and basic good nature of the people who came on the scene shortly afterwards was amazing.' He commends the emergency

services, the hospital staff and his driver, but his emphasis is not on the professions and institutions of modern society – like the health sector in particular – which are grossly underdeveloped, and he does not mention at all the condition of the infrastructure – the road, a national primary route that is a single lane carriageway, essentially unchanged since his grandfather's time. He speaks instead of the members of a traditional community that 'did everything they could for us', 'moved the other car' (in which two American tourists were travelling; the passenger killed and the driver seriously injured – they get no mention!), 'stayed with us throughout the whole event. People, I am sure, who were having their own busy day, maybe with a job to do, or children to pick up from school. There was a very bad traffic jam because of the accident also, and all those people had to sit and wait for at least an hour. It must have been very frustrating. But instead of being faced with frustrated, angry, busy people, all I met was genuine concern, caring and kindness. I was actually very proud to be Irish that day and to have it confirmed to me that the community spirit is still very much to the forefront in Irish society.'[5]

But perhaps, as Hamlet's mother says, the Minister for Community 'protests too much'. His insistence that he has seen the living reality of community may be interpreted as a sign that it is in fact dead, or sickly at any rate. Despite the warm reassurances of Dev's grandson that the spirit of community is alive and well and living in Killarney, the cold reality is that rates of suicide and deliberate self-harm have been soaring, especially amongst young people who, like Hamlet, seemingly have everything to live for. A great and increasing number of us are taking prescribed medication for depression and related mood imbalances, and a great number of the rest of us are self-medicating with alcohol and narcotics. Like Hamlet, the response of a great many Irish people to the announcement that Ireland is the happiest country in the world has been something between mild scepticism and scornful disbelief. The ongoing tribunals of inquiry into political corruption, the scandals of child sex abuse and cruelty in the church and in church-run state institutions, public inquiries into the Gardai for framing an innocent man for murder, and for shooting dead a psychiatric patient, the Blood Transfusions Board, the illicit sale of deceased children's body parts to pharmaceuticals companies, the hospitals and Accident and Emergency (A&E) crisis, people commuting for hours on a ramshackle road network because an entry-level house in Dublin costs well in excess of what is

affordable even to people with good jobs, and a host of other issues, give us grounds to suspect that something may be rotten in the state of Ireland. But what exactly is the source of that rot may not be easy to identify, and may be even more difficult to eradicate. If it were simply a matter of exposing his uncle's villainy, Hamlet could have stopped the rot and restored the health and happiness of Denmark, but the rot is deeper than any tribunal of inquiry can uncover, and extends even into the heart of the hero himself.

ACCELERATED TRANSFORMATION, STASIS AND THE EXPERIENCE OF LIMINALITY

Shakespeare's *Hamlet* resonated strongly with his audience in 1603–4 when it was first performed. Elizabethan England, in the throes of transformation to modernity was at the same time gridlocked by internal contradictions. On the one hand this was an era charac-terised by balance between the powerful Tudor (and later Stuart) Court and parliament, a form of 'social partnership' consolidated and centred in London; a period of great expansion and prosperity, England was on the cusp of becoming a world power and Elizabethan London was becoming a world city. On the other hand England had been in a state of overt and/or latent civil war for a long time prior to Elizabeth's reign. That era was closing with no Tudor heir, the crown passing to James I, under whom the Court declined and was marked by gratuitous favouritism and corruption and threatened to slide back into chaos, paradigmatically represented by the narrowly averted 'gunpowder plot'. There was a constant backdrop of war, with Spain especially, the defeat of the Armada in 1588 by no means settling the question, with England continually fighting wars by proxy in Holland and throughout the Atlantic and Caribbean, the Spanish raiding Plymouth and Falmouth in 1595 and assisting rebellious Ireland in 1601. Old established traditions, religions and hierarchies of power and authority were in a state of flux.

But, paradoxically, this experience of accelerated modernisation produced a morbid condition of stasis. Stasis, Derrida explains, means power that is 'against itself' (1997: 109); a state of inertia wherein equal and opposite forces have become opposed to one another. While stasis seems to mean the opposite of kinesis – motion – 'stasis also means (political) unrest, movement, revolt and civil war' (Derrida, 1997: 169). In Elizabethan England stasis was generated by tensions between monarchy and parliament, between town and country,

an emerging urban bourgeoisie and feudal landed aristocracy, local elites and internationally ambitious speculators, colonial rivalries competing for international trade, entrepreneurial pirates elevated to national heroes, sober Puritans and an emerging popular mass culture of 'merrie England' given to drunkenness and debauchery. Corruption and political intrigue between Court and parliament were rife. Sedition was in the air. This was the era of witchhunts and trials for heresy. London had been ravaged twice by plague in the ten years prior to *Hamlet*'s release, partly due to the city's rapid, uncontrolled expansion and the inadequacy of sanitation and public health.

These terms and conditions are echoed – on a smaller scale in historical comparative terms, though locally none the less significant – when we consider the experience of living in contemporary Ireland: a time of heady change and disorientation, and also of inertia and a feeling of powerlessness; a paradoxical condition of accelerated modernisation and stasis. In globalised, Celtic Tiger Ireland, change itself seems to be the only constant, yet while everything seems to be changing many of the old problems remain unsolved. Accelerated transformation actually masks a morbid kind of stasis: an interminable 'peace process', always threatening to unravel and subside into chaos, with an undercurrent of violence and organised gangsterism; the long, stable reign of government still underpinned by divisions stemming from civil war, with deeply engrained circles of patronage and privilege; practices of petty favouritism and gross corruption; unprecedented economic growth and prosperity, though uneven, unstable and highly contingent on the unpredictable play of global forces; a bourgeoning market for houses, cars, consumption of luxury goods, but growing inequality, social exclusion and relative poverty. A proliferation of new careers and opportunities in expanding sectors, but the contraction of a manufacturing sector, set to lose 10,000 jobs per year for the next decade. The unregulated and opportunist expansion of the capital city, fed by migration, led by unscrupulous speculation by 'developers': an untrammelled growth, poorly planned and regulated, resulting ironically in inertia; a city that cannot move for gridlock, where the expansion of its main orbital motorway is expected to exacerbate the congestion as it is given priority over public transit infrastructure; a city whose airport is amongst the most congested and dangerous in the world, whose sewage and waste disposal systems are choked and overloaded; where children are crowded into prefab schools, and where the sick and elderly languish for days in the dismal corridors of the A&E departments of creaking

hospitals that date from another age. And, as in Elizabethan England, melancholia, depression, anxiety and binge drinking are epidemic. Meanwhile we are advised: 'Don't worry. Be happy!'

A central theme of *Hamlet* is the disease arising from the tension between accelerated change and stasis at the level of the collective social body, and this social ill manifests symptomatically at the level of the individual in the form of melancholy – depression. This is the morbid condition that we in globalising Ireland share with Hamlet's Denmark, which was Shakespeare's analogue for Elizabethan England, experiencing the malaise of liminality – the coincidence of accelerated modernisation and stasis. And Shakespeare's *Hamlet* offers no 'happily ever after'. It ends in calamity and destruction for everyone: Hamlet's mother kills herself by drinking poison intended for Hamlet; Hamlet kills his girlfriend's father whom he mistook, rightly, of being a rat (he was about to 'rat' on Hamlet to his uncle); Ophelia becomes unhinged and kills herself; her brother, seeking vengeance for his father and his sister fights Hamlet; they kill each other, and in the midst of the carnage Hamlet finally manages to kill his uncle. Whatever is rotten in the state of Denmark is a contagion that spreads outward and spirals downward into madness, death and meaningless catastrophe. Despite reassurances that we are the happiest country in the world, Irish people are haunted by similar fears and anxieties of impending tragedy.

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF HAMLET'S MELANCHOLIA

There are a number of classic interpretations of Hamlet's melancholia. For example, Jones's[6] Freudian theory of Hamlet's Oedipus conflict, namely: Prince Hamlet's neurotic inability to act is a symptom of an inner conflict – his unconscious desire to kill his father and thereby to have his mother, and his envy of his uncle Claudius for having pre-emptively enacted his own (Hamlet's) desire. This unconscious nexus of conflicting emotions prevents him from avenging his father.

In Joyce's *Ulysses* this theory is rejected by Stephen (Joyce) and an alternative formulation is provided.[7] In Joyce's theory *Hamlet* is a dramatisation of the dialectic between Shakespeare's inner life and outer circumstances. First, the death of Shakespeare's father, and the earlier death of Shakespeare's son, Hamnet Shakespeare. Second, Shakespeare's betrayal by his wife, Anne Hathaway, who had adulterous affairs with Shakespeare's two brothers, Richard and

Edmund, and, in addition to this infidelity, Shakespeare's loss of his mistress, the 'Dark Lady of the Sonnets', to his best friend. In many ways Shakespeare's private troubles are a foretaste of the difficulties faced by contemporary men and women, of whom Bloom and Molly are representative, of balancing career and family life. At this time Shakespeare's career was flourishing. He was a businessman, an impresario, a proto-celebrity, moving in the right circles of London society, but this kept him away from home in Stratford-on-Avon, with predictable consequences all too familiar to ambitious and high-flying dual career couples today.

Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is thoroughly autobiographical. Shakespeare himself played Hamlet's father's ghost in original productions, identifying himself as the cuckolded dead father betrayed by his wife. And he is also his own reanimated dead son, Hamnet; Prince Hamlet represents Shakespeare's own unfulfilled destiny, the broken line of his descent, as well as his betrayal by his best friend, whose place is taken in the drama by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. As both father and son are dead – lacking, past and future are discontinuous, then, as Hamlet says 'the time is out of joint' (I, iv: 34). There is no continuity, no coherence; there is a spatial-temporal rift, a pathogenic schism, an identity crisis (Szakolczai, 2001). The symptom of this aphasia is what Kristeva tells us is the characteristic speech of the depressed: 'they utter sentences that are interrupted, exhausted, come to a standstill. Even phrases they cannot formulate. A repetitive rhythm, a monotonous melody emerge and dominate the broken logical sequences, changing them into recurring, obsessive litanies' (1989: 33). It is this melancholic stasis that Hamlet speaks of.

'WHO'S THERE?'
HAMLET'S LACK OF IDENTITY AND THE VACUUM OF SUBJECTIVITY

When the time is out of joint – aphasia – then the urgent question, the question with which the drama commences is 'Who's there?' Shakespeare must become both father and son to himself. He must restore his good name, defamed by his betrayals, and he must make a name for himself to live on in place of his dead son. Hamlet is Hamnet, resurrected and immortalised, and Hamnet/Hamlet reciprocally helps to make Shakespeare 'the immortal bard' of whom it has been said that the only one who has created more than Shakespeare is God. This theme of resurrection and redemption is the basis of Joyce's identification with Shakespeare (Kristeva, 1995: 181) and of Lacan's famous

formulation of Joyce as symptom – 'le sinthome Joyce' (Lacan, in Roudinesco, 1997: 370–4).

Like Shakespeare, in Joyce's biography there is a 'deficit' of the father, and also a progenitive failing. John S. Joyce was an alcoholic spendthrift who ill-treated his wife and children, frittered away the family's middle-class respectability and left the household in ruins. Lacan reads Joyce's work as an attempt at restoration. In Joyce's writing Lacan sees the language of psychosis. Jung had made the same diagnosis almost 50 years earlier, though he was unable to formulate its aetiology psychoanalytically.[8] In Lacan's account, Joyce himself is sane, though his father, a degenerate alcoholic, his daughter, Lucia, a schizophrenic, and his son, Giorgio, a feckless wastrel and a gigolo, are not. What is it that saves Joyce from madness? According to Lacan, Joyce's writing is the symptom: the phenomenon that covers – both masks as well as indicates – the presence of the Lack. Psychosis, in Lacan's formulation, is the unravelling of the three levels of reality – the imaginary, the symbolic and the real. Such an unravelling may otherwise have happened to Joyce, Lacan believes, due to the parental deficiency combined with the foreclosure of the future.

But for Joyce, the parental deficit and the schismic and aphasic personal biography – his exile, his repeated betrayal by friends and publishers, the failed lives of his children, his nomadic existence (he and his family moved home and lodgings with astonishing frequency – more than a dozen times in his childhood, and approximately 50 during his life) – were reflections of broader historical failures and structural transformations. The fall of the house of Joyce, his father's impotence, his children's failed futures, were inextricably bound up with the colonial impotence of the fatherland. That Joyce's home was in ruin was, as he himself clearly understood, a microcosmic manifestation of the political and economic ruination of Ireland; the failed lives of his children was the biographical correspondence of the experience of foreclosure for generations of subaltern subjects.

For Joyce, and for Lacan, not only is the time out of joint, but the subject is out of joint as well. There is no longer a unified rational subject 'born to set things right' as Hamlet feels himself to be cursed. Perhaps there never was, but such a coherent subject who can wield language so as to be the author of his own biography and to become master of history and architect of the future, as Joyce self-consciously and deliberately set out to be, is certainly the exception that proves the rule: the rule that the lot of mass society resembles more the sad fate of John S., Lucia and Giorgio Joyce. The wider cultural significance of

Joyce's work is that it represents the apotheosis of European Enlight-enment, modernity and modernism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, coinciding with the moment of its decadence; turning to the advent of the 'second coming' prophesised by Yeats: the slide towards fascist and communist totalitarianism, war and the Holocaust, materialism and insatiable consumerism; the blighted and melancholy future inherited by Joyce's children, and all the rest of us.

The key to understanding Hamlet's melancholy is not to be found by psychoanalysis in the restricted sense of the structural dynamics of subjective libidinal economy, but rather in conjunction with an expanded sociological analysis in which individual libidinal and psychic economies are contingent upon historical structural transformations and the general political economy. In other words, the aetiology of the epidemic melancholy of which Hamlet is an exemplary bearer is to be found through analysis of the recursive relationship between inner processes – biographical, interpersonal, psychological – and outer contexts – historical events, generational experiences, social structural transformations; or, in Mills's terms, the ways in which 'private troubles of milieu' are related to 'public issues of social structure' (1959: 8).

HAMLET'S AMBIVALENCE AND THE EXPERIENCE OF LIMINALITY

Hamlet is a traditional hero, with a modern mind. He is suspended between action, disabled by the infinite regress of reflection/reflexivity. Hamlet resonates as universal representation of the ambivalence of the human condition in times of liminality and cultural change such as early modern England and globalising Ireland. The question of identity, the question 'Who's there?' with which the play opens, reverberates and recurs throughout, and indeed resonates with Shake-speare's early modern audience, as it does with us today.

The setting of *Hamlet* is liminality: the rituals and rites of passage of funeral, marriage and coronation in quick succession. But all of these rites of passage are dubious and uncertain: was the King's death unnatural and the state funeral a charade to mask a murder? Is this a marriage or an illicit incestuous union? Is Claudius a legitimate King, or is Hamlet the rightful heir to the throne? Rather than achieving closure, transcendence and the initiation of a new phase of life and development, these failed and inconclusive rites of passage leave the social order undone. Claudius and Gertrude proclaim reintegration:

that order has been restored, but Hamlet experiences only anti-structure and disorder. The moral order in which Hamlet finds himself is fluid and uncertain, and the speed of change itself is an essential part of the problem. 'O most wicked speed, to post with such dexterity to incestuous sheets. It is not, nor it cannot come to good' (I, ii: 16–19). Similarly, modernity as the experience of permanent liminality (Szakolczai, 1999), amplified and accentuated by Ireland's accelerated modernisation, a heightened experience of dis-integration and extensive anti-structure, lies at the source of our present epidemic of depression.

Hamlet resonates with the experience of Irish people today because he embodies the ambivalence characteristic of Ireland's liminal experience of collision culture (Keohane and Kuhling, 2004) – the incomplete and faulted transformation of social structure; strung out on the tensions between the global and the local, between Catholicism and secular materialism, between the rural and the urban, between the moral orders and social institutions of traditional community and modern society. Hamlet represents the state of mind of someone who is facing into the future, but who is compelled by the past. Like young Irish people today, he is educated, well-rounded and accomplished, but he still feels the weight and responsibility of religious belief and tradition. He enjoys the freedom bestowed by clear-sighted reason, but he is never completely sure of his ground, and the more he cogitates the less certain he becomes: 'the native hue of resolution is sicklied over with the pale cast of thought' (III, i: 2–3). He wants to act decisively, but he is undercut by self-doubt and guilty conscience. He is secular, agnostic, introspective and self-reflexive, but yet he is restrained from suicide by the vestiges of religious belief. Hamlet represents the best of the present and the promise of the future. He is 'the expectancy and rose of the fair state, the glass of fashion and the mould of form' (III, i: 8) but part of him dwells in the past. He idealises his father (history, tradition), even though from the ghost's own account we know that the traditional order he represents had grievous faults and foul sins for which he burns in Purgatory. In Joyce's interpretation, the tragedy of Hamlet centres on the desire for the (impossible) rapprochement and reconciliation between King Hamlet and Prince Hamlet, father and son, history and futurity, the old feudal order and the emerging early modern society of the English renaissance; tradition and modernity.[9] These forms of life and states of consciousness coexist uneasily and incongruously in contemporary Ireland. Tradition and modernity share the same time/space. Like the

ghost of Hamlet's father, in Ireland the past, repressed, returns and intrudes into the present, informing the future. Diverse forms of life collide and grate against one another, fuse into hybrid forms that are sometimes grotesque, sometimes marvellous, usually confusing and bewildering. Part of Hamlet's problem throughout is that he remains unsure of what his father's ghost is 'really': his father's 'real' ghost? His own hallucination? Or a demon in the form of his father's ghost sent to confuse him?

Who is Hamlet? And who are we? As his father's ghost is enigmatic, Hamlet is as much an enigma to himself. Hamlet seems a modern antithesis of some of Shakespeare's 'older' characters – Lear, for example, who 'had ever but slenderly known himself', and others who represent certain 'types'. What type of man is Hamlet? He is 'a soldier, a courtier, a scholar', a noble-minded, sensitive, deeply perceptive, well-rounded, renaissance man, a prototype new man for a new age. But does Hamlet's self-reflexivity, his introspection and preoccupation with his feelings, emotions, his relations with and responsibilities to others around him as well as his own inner processes, enable him to know himself any more than Lear and leave him any better off? And even though Hamlet questions himself and examines his conscience, does he actually know himself? Can he in fact know himself? According to Eagleton, Hamlet hesitates on the threshold of the symbolic order, refusing to take up a determinate position. 'Hamlet has no "essence" of being whatsoever … he is pure deferral and diffusion, a hollow void which offers nothing determinate to be known' (Eagleton, 1987: 72). This existential uncertainty comes to the fore and is amplified under liminal conditions of accelerated social transformation. 'Hamlet is a radically transitional figure, strung out between a traditional social order to which he is marginal, and a future epoch of individualism which will surpass it' (Eagleton, 1987: 74). Hamlet represents the enigma of identity that underpins modern subjectivity. The more we know of him, the more he tries to understand himself through self-reflection and examination of his conscience, the less sure he becomes of himself, of who he is, of what his purpose and destiny are. Self-knowledge for Hamlet, as for many deep-thinking and reflexive modern people, is ultimately knowledge of lack of self, a knowledge that can be debilitating, anxiety-provoking and profoundly depressing. But if this intractable unfixity and insecurity of identity is a necessary condition of possibility for depression, it is not a sufficient condition. What is it that triggers Hamlet's depression, that triggers the melancholy that was such an

epidemic of the age in which he first appeared on stage, and that is epidemic in Ireland today?

THE LOSS OF CHERISHED IDEALS: HAMLET'S FURY TOWARDS HIS MOTHER AND THE SOCIAL PATHOLOGIES OF ANOMIE, EGOISM AND NIHILISM

Hamlet suffers a great loss, the loss of cherished ideals. As many critics have argued, Hamlet's father's ghost represents history, a time and a tradition that has been poisoned, buried and forgotten. But in addition to the loss of historicity, Hamlet also suffers the loss of his mother. Several critics have noted the peculiarities of Hamlet's mother, Queen Gertrude. While she is a central character of the drama, she is lightly drawn and underdeveloped. In so far as Shakespeare gives her 'character' at all, she is fickle and frivolous, shallow and unthinking – an 'air-head' we might say today; morally vacuous perhaps, but not wilfully malevolent. Why is it then that it is she, his mother, more so than the more wicked and heinous characters, who is the target of Hamlet's fury? A number of possible interpretations have been advanced; for example, that Gertrude represents Anne Hathaway, older, more sexually experienced, and whose promiscuity was deeply resented by Shakespeare. This seems unlikely, as Shakespeare himself had several lovers, including, in true theatrical fashion, a homosexual affair as famously decrypted by Oscar Wilde (Ellmann, 1987: 278–80). While no doubt a source of marital turmoil, it is likely that Shakespeare would have felt that 'what's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander', as it were. Less autobiographically, more generally, feminist critics read Hamlet's fury at his mother in terms of Shakespeare's misogyny, as Ophelia is also treated harshly by Hamlet. But this charge may be wide of the mark, as Shakespeare's oeuvre contains several sympathetic and noble heroines, and Hamlet in particular is most obviously a critique of patriarchy – the tradition represented by his father, Polonius, Laertes and Claudius, in which women are pawns in the power games of men. In fact Gertrude represents neither any particular woman nor women in general; rather, she represents the maternal principle.

Hamlet's Queen Mother represents maternal ideals and virtues of care, fidelity and cultural reproduction that underpin the wellbeing of the body politic. Power has always been balanced by care. Feminist anthropology (Tanner, 1981) and sociology of the body (O'Neill, 2004b) have shown how the origin of the family and primordial

society begins not with hunting, tool-making and weaponry, but with the transcendental originary gifts of life – childbirth, care – mother's milk and protection within the household. In Classical antiquity and in the world's heritage of mythologies the Pantheon is a balance of male and female gods and goddesses: Poseidon, Zeus and Apollo are balanced by the powers of Gae, the earth mother, Athena, goddess of culture and wisdom, Aphrodite, goddess of love and affection, and Hestia, goddess of the home, care and charity. The wellbeing of civilisation depends upon the balance and harmony assured by the strength of these ideals, institutionalised in law, governance and morality, and cultivated as civic virtues. In the Christian tradition the Madonna, as 'Queen of Heaven' and 'Mother of Perpetual Succour', represents these ideals and the Madonna and Child is the central iconic representation of Renaissance art. The motif of the Madonna and Child represents the state of balanced, harmonious wellbeing of civilisation (O'Neill, 2002) promised by the Renaissance, a promised state of wellbeing in which Shakespeare had a moral and political investment, but one which he also felt was betrayed or endangered. Shakespeare (and Hamlet) anticipates the coming to fruition of the Renaissance in Enlightenment and emancipation: 'What a piece of work is a man!' Hamlet declares. 'How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action, how like an angel! In apprehension how like a god!' (II, ii: 26–30). But, he says, 'man delights not me; no, nor woman neither'. His contemporaries have not realised these noble faculties and potentialities, but, if anything, negate and refute them. Shakespeare's celebration of nobility and his aspiration for perfection, Kaufman says, 'is coupled with a vast contempt for most men' (1980: 21). Hamlet's despair anticipates Yeats's indictment of modern morality, that 'the best lack all conviction, and the worst are full of passionate intensity' (1996: 187).

The iconic representation of Enlightenment, the democratic Revolutions and modernity is Marianne, the bare-breasted woman in the vanguard of the people, holding aloft the banner of the Republic, the central motif of the Revolution who adorns French currency and postage stamps to this day. According to Sennett (1996) Marianne's bare breasts do not represent a youthful, eroticised 'liberty'. Rather, her ample bosom, like the Madonna's breast, represents the promise of maternal care and nurturance that from now on will be provided by the Republic to all of the people. The Statue of Liberty represents the same principle of maternal care promised to the huddled masses.

This promise would be realised over the course of the following two centuries by the development, institutionalisation and elaboration of what came to be the welfare state of the late twentieth century: the modern state as a collective home comprising public education, health care, housing, pensions and social security, financed by a central treasury, organised on principles of a total gift exchange of progressive redistribution, forming a complex matrix of interdependent and reciprocal social relations of mutual solidarity on which the wellbeing of modern society rests (Mauss, 2002; Titmuss, 1971). Shakespeare of course could hardly have anticipated the content of that modern configuration of the collective household, but he understood its formal principle – the maternal ideal at the heart of any form of life that is civilisation and not barbarism – very well. It is this ideal that Queen Gertrude, Hamlet's mother, ought to represent.

But Gertrude has quickly gotten over the death of her old husband, and has been seduced by someone else, her husband's younger brother, a man who is brash, ambitious and ruthless, and she now appears to Hamlet's eyes as shallow, fickle and motivated by carnal desires rather than by higher ideals. She demonstrates that 'marriage vows are false as dicers' oaths' (III, iv: 5–6). Queen Gertrude represents the state as motherland, that, having given birth, ought to nurture and care for her children. She now appears derelict in her duty. Elizabeth I had several times been petitioned by her subjects to marry and continue the stable Tudor line, but the once celebrated 'virgin Queen' was increasingly seen as barren, perhaps even, under her appearances, a man! Similarly the Maid of Eireann is no longer chaste and virtuous. She wants to shop. She just wants to have fun. Mother Ireland increasingly seems derelict in her duty of care to her children. She will no longer provide a collective home and guarantee the care and maintenance of her children. Social security, housing, pensions and health care in particular are increasingly privatised. The health and wellbeing of Celtic Tiger cubs is now a matter for themselves in the economic jungle of the free market. This of course is by no means confined to Ireland. Neoliberalism as the political ideology of globalisation entails a coordinated, systematic and transnational campaign to roll back the social securities provided by national welfare states, to disassemble the collective household and to aggressively promote market opportunities for enterprising individuals. Hamlet's rage towards Gertrude is directed not towards a person, but towards an ideal – or rather towards the lack, the betrayal of an ideal. When

Hamlet rages that 'Frailty, thy name is woman!' he is indicting the weakness with which the ideal of care is institutionalised, and when he holds a mirror so that his mother 'turn'st mine eyes into my very soul' (III, iv: 20–1) the black and grained spots she sees there are the contemporary equivalents of the black spots of gross inequality, social exclusion and injustice engendered by neoliberalism and the diseconomies of globalisation ignored by governments today. The character of Gertrude is left deliberately underdeveloped because the ideal that she ought to represent is eclipsed, faded and underdeveloped in Shakespeare's time, as again it is in peril in our own age of globalisation.

Hamlet represents idealism, disillusioned and devolved to cynicism. In contrast to the ideals represented by his father's ghost, the new ones seem shallow: King Claudius is an ambitious over-reacher, like Macbeth, the valiant general who thought he should be King, Claudius is 'a cut-purse of the Empire and the rule, that from a shelf the precious diadem stole, and put it in his pocket' (III, iv: 33). He is an ambitious and able dealer, cunning, rhetorically gifted, pragmatic, a skilled diplomat and statesman. In so far as his hawkish qualities and ambition for power are admirable, Claudius is a harbinger of the ideal-type subject of contemporary globalisation. On the surface Denmark appears to be thriving under his governance, but underneath is moral corruption and spiritual dereliction. Queen Gertrude, in so far as she fails to represent what she ought to represent – the duties of the state for the care and nurturance of her children, the principle of inter-generational solidarity – rather represents the moral position of unthinking materialism; desire for an easy life, luxury and uncomplicated happiness: 'Let's not think too much about it.' 'Forget about the past. Live in the now', is her maxim. These, of course, are the clarion calls of global neoliberalism, succinctly exclaimed by corporate advertising: 'The future is now'; 'Just do it'; 'I'm lovin' it'. Polonious voices conventional morality, in this case economic and moral individualism. Polonious panders to whatever the prevailing power is, a 'yes man', a 'sleeveen' we would call him in Ireland. His windy moralising is mere pretence to wisdom. He is full of the pious platitudes and hollow clichés of economic pruden-tialism and moral individualism prevalent in post-Catholic, affluent Ireland; 'dress rich, but not gaudy', for 'apparel oft proclaims the man'; 'neither a borrower nor a lender be', and 'above all, to thine own self be true' (I, iii: 18–26).

Polonious's advice 'to thine own self be true' is the overriding moral imperative of a culture of individualism, but as a principle it is an empty tautology. Morality begins with membership of a group, Durkheim (1973) says. There is no morality that is intrinsic to the individual outside of society, as the truth of our own self in the absence of collective morality is boundless egoism. In the absence of ideals demarcating moral boundaries desires are decontained, and discharge themselves gratuitously and aimlessly as insatiable selfishness and nihilism. It is this decontainment of desire in the liminal phase of social transformation, when old ideals are vestigial, ghostly shades, and new ideals are still only vapid semblances marked by frailty, that is the source of the rot in the state of Denmark, as it is today in the state of Ireland. The ideals represented by Claudius (naked self-interest) Polonious (conventionalism) and Gertrude (careless materialism), Hamlet feels, pale against the older, heroic order represented by his father, but that order Hamlet knows was deeply flawed and compromised and thus cannot be reinstated. This interregnum, when the old is dying and the new has not yet been born, is a thoroughly demoralised and demoralising condition. This makes the state of Denmark seem a 'sterile promontory', and the heavens – the realm of ideas that should appear a magnificent, sacred canopy, 'fretted with golden fire' – appear merely as 'a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours'.

The lack of outer social (moral) structure is replicated in the interior of the individual, so that the modern subject suffers from an inner emptiness. Baudelaire (1988) calls this '*l'infini que vous portez en vous*', from which springs '*le gôut pour l'infini*', the taste for infinity, the characteristic '*fleur du mal*' of modernity, and the source of our characteristic mood of ennui, spleen, melancholy. As Durkheim (1974) shows, we need limits, moral regulation. Moral regulation is provided by our membership of social institutions: relatively stable and transcendent systems of social relations beholden to collective representations, ideals against which we self-reflexively form ourselves with reference to and against. Hamlet's meaningful network of social relations and their shared ideals are breaking down around him. Traditional authority of the Court is undermined by political intrigue and treachery; the family is undermined by adultery and infidelity; his friends betray him for money and the Court's favour, and his mother, the Queen, is derelict in her duty of care. Character formation and stabilisation is impossible in the absence of institutionalised ideals, and this is the source of Hamlet's mental

instability. In *The Corrosion of Character* Sennett (1999) argues that the most fundamental sociological consequence of globalisation and neoliberalism is the systematic destructuration of ideas-bearing social institutions. Primarily Sennett identifies the structural transformation of the organisational form of the firm, corporation or body within which the identity of the employee is formed in terms of meritocratic hierarchy, mutual interdependence and the teleology of a career structure. The broader context is the structural transformation of the modern social security or welfare state as organisational matrix of reciprocal rights and responsibilities, a collective household in which the identity of modern citizenship is formed; privatisation – the restructuring of public institutions as market relations – and the 'flexibilisation' and 'outsourcing' of labour in global corporate restructuring have made character formation precarious and uncertain for a whole generation living through the experience of globalisation. Transformations in the political and economic institutions and relations are mirrored in the de-structuration of institutions of family and community, and as these social relations become systematically undermined and dismantled the structuring conditions of modern subjectivity become undone and ultimately become manifest in diffuse and dispersed social ills, lack of wellbeing and individualised psychosomatic symptoms. We are only beginning to glimpse the sociological, political and epidemiological effects of this transformation. In the accelerated culture of globalised Ireland, colliding with the vestiges of traditional community, the corrosive effects of this structural transformation are felt acutely. In so far as Hamlet is mentally unstable, delusional and melancholic, so are all of us who experience the liminality and anomie of Ireland's collision culture prone to insanity.

Like Hamlet, we cannot fit comfortably in the new social order. We find 'the time is out of joint' and that we are cursed with the task of trying to set it right. This is the predicament of modern people: our reason enables us to see and understand the complex problems of modern life, but we are confronted not only by their complexity, but also by their moral ambiguity. While we have gained clarity of perception we have lost the networks of stable social relationships within which guiding ideals are collectively formed and institutionalised, which might have more readily enabled us to judge right and wrong, which might inspire, guide and give courage to our actions. Like Hamlet, we find ourselves on our own when confronting complex problems and discover that the more we think and the better we

see, the more the problems demanding action become cloudy 'grey areas' where any decisive action raises further questions and moral dilemmas. We find ourselves both empowered and incapacitated at the same time. This interior stasis mirroring exterior social conditions is the source of modern melancholy. Thus, 'melancholy is something more than a pervasive mood, though it is for modern society, its most widespread and in some sense most characteristic mood' (Ferguson, 1994: xv). Ironically, melancholy is a dark cloud that arises from the ontological and epistemological clarity of Enlightenment and that hangs over the existential conditions of modernity. It is the moral-practical and spiritual ground tone of post-traditional secular society, a mood that becomes amplified and accentuated under conditions of accelerated social transformation, as it is in Ireland today.

CONCLUSION

If we want to understand the epidemic of depression, the rising incidence of suicide and deliberate self-harm, binge drinking and related problems in contemporary societies undergoing intensive and extensive social transformations associated with globalisation, then we need to think about them not only as the personal problems of individual people, patients and sufferers; nor in terms of their being somehow unique to the present historical experience. Instead, we need to think about these problems in terms of broader social and cultural pathologies associated with historically recurring civilisational crises and periods of accelerated transformation that have a global reach. They become manifest as symptoms at the level of individual patients' bodies in particular social contexts, because 'neither the life [or the health] of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both' (Mills, 1959: 3).

The melancholy spirit of globalisation in Ireland is a consequence of Ireland's collision culture: an experience of structural transformation characterised by the simultaneity of accelerated modernisation and the persistence of the vestiges of older social forms, while higher values and metaphysical ideals are destabilised and uncertain. We find ourselves living in an extensive anti-structure: suspended in stasis betwixt and between political stability that is also corrupt and precarious; wealth, but growing inequality; urban growth, but that is squalid and blighted; a liberal, affluent culture, but one that is shallow and vulgar; a new emancipated subjectivity, but one that is aimless and listless; a promiscuous and indiscriminate 'openness'

to the new, a frailty and readiness to embrace the fashion, whatever it may turn out to be; an acceleration and intensification of all things and experiences, but yet stasis, inertia and ennui; a derision of past beliefs and ideals, but softened by a note of nostalgia and a wistful romance for their passing, and reassuring platitudes that 'the spirit of community' is still alive and well. Is this a description of happiness? Perhaps, though only the kind of delusional happiness that precedes tragedy.

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6
Binge drinking and Overeating: Globalisation and Insatiability

Orienting Questions

- What is the role of the pub in modern society?
- What is pub culture?
- How are drinking practices reproduced and regulated?
- How is the pub culture transformed by globalisation?
- How are drinking practices affected by these transformations?

Ireland is presently said to have an alcohol problem, characterised by out of control drinking, binge drinking and drunkenness associated with random violence. In some respects there is nothing new about this, as drink is a recurring motif in the collective representation of Ireland and Irishness. So what, if anything, is new? Is the new Irish drinking problem a reiteration of a cultural stereotype, or simply a moral panic? Or is there an emerging phenomenon that needs interpretation? Irish drinking, indeed all drinking, has been associated historically and anthropologically with socially productive and life affirming practices: gift exchange and solidarity; ritual and rites of passage; conviviality, sociability and recreation; transcendence, celebration and communion with the divine (O'Brien, 2007). Problem drinking might be approached as drinking practices that have lost their connection to these functions, and have become free-floating ends unto themselves – mindless, solitary, anti-social or nihilistic drinking. The Irish pub, the specific site of modern Irish drinking, has recently undergone an accelerated and thoroughgoing transformation, characterised by spatial-temporal expansion and disassembly and restructuration of social relations. Both the subject and object of globalisation – the pub is Ireland's contribution to global mass culture, and, recursively, globalisation has transmogrified the Irish pub into a postmodern simulacrum – the new Irish pub is a microcosm in which

the antinomies of the experiences of globalisation and neoliberalism are played out.

This chapter will explore the ways in which the reconfiguration of the Irish pub through processes of globalisation has produced the new form of Irish problem drinking. Specifically, we will show how through the deregulation that has accompanied the growth of super-pubs, and the increase of privatised consumption together with a rise in anomie, have contributed to Ireland's epidemic of binge drinking. In the first section we show how the rise in binge drinking can be linked with historical transformations in the social role of the public house from a public institution, a locus of community, conviviality and sociability where behaviour was regulated formally and informally by set opening hours and the normalising gaze of both the publican and other clientele, to a super-pub, a business corporation whose goal is the maximisation of profits and therefore alcohol consumption at the expense of sociability. The last section uses a more psychological perspective, and draws on Lacan, Sennett and Lasch to explain how the emergent culture of hedonism and narcissism, and what appears as the unbridled pursuit of pleasure associated with the rise of consumer society, are paradoxically the opposite of pleasure: an expression of anxiety, a search for community in the context of the existential anxieties presented by what seems to some the lack of permanence, isolation and apparently limitless choice. As well, binge drinking is associated with the rise in social stress and anxiety and other psychopathologies of modernity that accompany the flexibilisation and deregulation characteristic of economic globalisation.

In Ireland the institutions of traditional community have persisted longer than in most other modern societies, and alcohol consumption has played an essential role in social recreation and cultural reproduction. As a good exhanged in gift relations – in the practice of 'rounds', in its ritual use at weddings, wakes and other rites of passage, in the practice of drinking after mass on Sunday afternoons – alcohol has been inextricably bound up with community and religious life in Ireland. The normal social rate of alcohol consumption in Ireland may be found to be high in comparison with other modern western societies because the quantity and quality of the institutions of traditional community are high, and thus that the Irish drink more than others may not be a sign of social 'pathology' at all, but quite the contrary: as 'normal',

and as an indication of the healthy state of tradition and community in contemporary Irish society. Indeed, Ireland has recently been found to be amongst the happiest societies in the world, due in a large measure to the quality of traditional community life. The report concludes that 'Ireland wins because it successfully combines the most desirable elements of the new – the fourth highest gross domestic product per head in the world in 2005, low unemployment, political liberties – with the preservation of certain cosy elements of the old, such as stable family and community life' (EIU, 2004: 4). But our rate of alcohol use and abuse has increased sharply in recent years. Even by comparison with our own standards we have begun to drink abnormally and pathologically. This change in Irish drinking coincides with the decline of community and the decomposition of traditional institutions.

THE PUBLIC HOUSE AS PUBLIC SPHERE

The pub, an abbreviation of 'public house', is an institution of the Enlightenment. What had previously been the business of a monestary or abbey, or more commonly in the case of Ireland as the monestaries had been forcably closed by Cromwell and the Elizabethan plantations, a domestic house, the enterprise of brewing and distilling as a craft, and often a woman's craft, was drawn into the public realm where it became the object of the controls of the state and normative accountability in the public sphere. In fact, as Habermas (1991: 14–30) shows, the etymology of the 'public house' like 'public utilities', 'public bodies' or 'public service' means an institution of the state, a domain into which the state has extended its dominion as part of an expansive process of institutionalisation oganised around the central apparatus of revenue (Habermas, 1991: 17). The English Licensing Acts of the seventeenth century, for example, acknowledged that, like the coffee houses, the tavern had become a locus of assembly and free conversation, of political criticism and opinion formation, and potentially of dissent and sedition; places where pamphlets and caricatures were circulated, and ballads and verses commenting on power and current affairs were aired to a general audience. The solution, from a governance point of view, was not simply to shut down these emerging centres, but as with pamphleteers who, when incorporated into the press, could be functional to political parties and the interests of governance,

the licensed public house would become a crucial source of public revenues, a regulated space of conversation and discourse, and a moderated safety valve operating in civil society as a locus of community, recreation and conviviality.

Sennett (2002) tells us that the public sphere, the norms of modern discourse and the arts of conversation began in the dramaturgical scenes of the coffee house and the pub. The coffee houses of Europe's trading cities were essential loci of information on international trade and business, so much so that the proprietors of coffee shops in some cases became newspaper publishers and insurance brokers. These emerging modern spaces, as well as having their own 'house rules',

were governed by a cardinal rule: in order for information to be as full as possible, distinctions of rank were temporarily suspended; anyone sitting in the coffeehouse had a right to talk to anyone else, to enter into any conversation, whether he knew the other people or not, whether he was bidden to speak or not. It was bad form even to touch on the social origins of other persons when talking to them in the coffeehouse, because the free flow of talk might then be impeded. (Sennett, 2002: 81)

A similar scene emerged in the coaching inns and the city pubs. It is a mistake to think of the cafes and the pubs of the eighteenth century as having a proletarian clientele, Sennett says. As many of these drinking places were adjacent or even attached to theatre buildings they served as pre- and post-performance gathering points for the audience. In these city pubs the cardinal rule of temporary suspension of social rank to facilitate free conversation applied also, as did the dramaturgical conventions of speaking in the coffee houses: 'a man standing up suddenly when he had a "point" to make (colloquial usage dates from this practice), … a speaker was "settled" by sheer noisemaking on the part of the others when he became tiresome' (Sennett, 2002: 83).

As both an object of state regulation and, like the coffee house, a new space of assembly and free conversation – an essential institution of the modern public sphere itself – the pub was the locus of communication, of discussion of news and events, politics and business. Such conversation was itself subject to the informal though normatively binding rules and conventions of the house, instituted and upheld by members of the drinking community and sanctioned by them and by the publican who determined whether conversation was becoming too heated, when certain customers had had enough, when they ought to be 'cut off' or even barred, whether on a temporary or

permanent basis. This latter formal sanction, as a power vested in the publican by the licensing law and that also entailed the informal sanctions of shame and ostracism from the sociable company of the community, was usually reserved for fighting and physical violence. When an argument couldn't be settled by communicative action the protagonists were told to 'take it outside', again underlining the pub as an institution of the Enlightenment public sphere. Conversation, argument and debate, idle chat and sociability were the communicative forms of modern public life, which the public house facilitated, accommodated and helped normatively to institutionalise in civil society. Civilised men (and it was usually only men) were expected to moderate their language and to hold their temper, even with drink taken. The man who could not 'hold his drink' and could not 'conduct himself', who habitually 'made a beast of himself', wasn't 'fit company' and risked both informal and formal exclusion.

BIO-POWER AND THE PUB: A FOUCAUDIAN ANALYSIS

The simultaneous development of the public sphere and the apparatus of the state can be formulated in Foucaudian terms as the coalescence of disciplinary discourses constituting a panoptic regime of bio-power. The governance of alcohol is located in this matrix: alcohol production, distribution and consumption became visible, transparant, subject to scrutiny, measurement, evaluation and rational regulation. The often dubious quality of homecraft brewers' and distillers' deceptively and even dangerously adulterated product became standardised, and the commerce of the orderly, rule-governed public house became progressively differentiated from the unruly tavern as house of ill repute. Alcohol is a crucial source of central revenue, though the state's investment in the liquor trade incurs costs that must be balanced, such as the public health and social security costs of alcohol depencency and the public order costs of anti-social behaviour. The penetration of disciplinary discourses and swarming authorities (state, religious, medical, policing) into capilliary social relations, appropriating, controlling, reforming, improving, is a process that involves the subjectification of the alcohol drinker into the self-monitoring, responsible, moderate 'social drinker' who contributes to collective wellbeing by taxation and cultural reproduction in civil society.

In Ireland, as elsewhere, the development and institutionalisation of the public sphere closely correlates to the history of licensing

the alcohol trade, broadly: from relative lack of regulation in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, to the institutionalisation of modern nineteenth-century licensing laws, culminating in the 1870 Licensing Act;[1] controlling the quality of drink, its alcohol strength, the price, the number of outlets, the conditions of sale, the time (days of trade, hours of trade, opening and closing times), the governance of space (location of premises, conditions of premises, numbers of persons permitted on premises, hygiene, facilities, safety, state of intoxication of people on the premises) and so on. The Licensing Act of 1902 consolidated and refined the 1870 Act,[2] capping the number of licences at the number of those currently in use. No new licences would be issued, so a new pub required the acquisition and transfer of an existing licence, and thus the closure of an old pub before a new pub could be opened. And in the case of an application for a licence for a new pub in the city, two 'country' licences had first to be acquired and the pubs they pertained to closed down.[3] The conditions of the 1902 Licensing Act prevailed for almost the entire twentieth century, its basic conditions being reformed only in 1998, and again in 2002, coinciding with the expansion of Dublin's suburbs and the growth of new towns during the recent economic boom.

Alcohol as a source of tax revenue coalesced with regimes of bio-power in the figure/institution of the publican, the licensee, the subject legally responsible for running an orderly public house (as distinct from the tavern/shebeen/kip/disorderly house where illicit (untaxed, unregulated) alcohol was sold, and where the sex trade also flourished with its associated public health and moral hygiene problem). By contrast, the public house and the business of the publican was a family business, where the publican and his family resided above the trading floor. In Irish society the publican enjoyed a social status and respectability similar to a local police sergeant, schoolmaster, doctor or even parish priest. The publican was proprietor of a 'local' pub, whose clientele was drawn from a neighbourhood usually coextensive with a parish. The publican was the proprietor of what was very often the most substantial business in the parish/neighbourhood, especially in working-class city districts (and Dublin, for example, was Europe's poorest city with the largest proportion of its population living without secure employment in slums and tenements through the entire nineteenth century and well into the second half of the twentieth century). The pub cum grocers/general store, like the pawn shop, played the role of a bank, extending credit and 'tick' to its regular clientele, advancing small

loans or more commonly a line of credit in liquor, to cover important community events such as local weddings and wakes.

The Licensing Act of 1902 was the watershed of the institution of the Irish publican as a substantial proprietor, his livelihood now protected from competition by new entrants, the licence became a very valuable asset and commodity that the publican had a very strong vested interest in protecting. As responsible licensee the publican became fully implicated, complicit and coextensive with the state. As both object and subject of the emerging regime of bio-power, the publican as owner of a licensed premises stood at the intersection of the formal system of the rule of law and the informal system of norms of his 'establishment' – as the Irish pub was frequently and tellingly known. The publican put his own stamp on his pub, a house style, a unique and characteristic ambiance. More important than décor, regulars are bearers and representatives of that ambiance, and a pub's character and its regulars are in fact synonymous – regulars are characters.

Regular characters and publicans play reciprocal roles that conform to general types and common scenarios that are well known in the pub scene. The pub, like the coffee house, was a rule-governed dramaturgy constituted by the performances of publican and regulars. As well as the 'sponger' who poses the risk of unbalancing the reciprocal order of gift exchange in convivial drinking, the publican has to manage the obstreperous customer who threatens the order of reciprocal conversation. And these, like the bore and the clown and other pub types, are also regulars and must be managed by the artful publican, watched for their threshold, when they've had enough, when they're becoming annoying to others, and discretely cautioned and advised to go home. In this, the publican can rely on the other regulars who 'know the form', and the publican enters a surreptitious alliance with them to keep an eye on the situation. Only very rarely does an experienced publican have to resort to the formal legal sanction of the bar, and when a customer is barred, temporarally or 'for life' it is a powerful sanction as it invokes the collective power of the normalising gaze of the community. This communicative matrix of reciprocal exchanges between the publican and his clientele, regulars and passing trade, constitutes the dramaturgy of the pub, and in so far as the pub constitutes a unique scene it means that the specific form of this dramaturgy, though displaying infinite variety and particularity, conforms to general forms and types. For instance, the individual publican is responsible licensee, the pub is a family

business at the centre of a community coextensive with a parish as the ecclesiastical and administrative unit of government, serving a clientele of locals and regulars. In so far as problem drinking occurs in this context – which of course it does, and is what Durkheim would call 'normal' problem drinking (1982: 60) – the problem is managed and controlled by the members within that dramaturgy. The spatial-temporal parameters and the outer limits of sanction are set by the licensing law, but the definition of the problem, its articulation in terms of types and typical problems – the drunk prone to violence, the trickster, the joker, the trouble-maker who 'stirs it up', the harmless fool, the mooch, the merry widow, the straying housewife, the party girl, the young wastrel, the alcoholic neglecting or abusing his wife and children – are set by the publican. Common and recurring types of problem drinker are in every pub, and every publican and his regulars know how to handle these problem drinkers in terms of social choreography and interpersonal diplomacy at the level of the specific lifeworld of the particular pub. The publican knows not just the type, but the particular personality behind the type; not just the typical situation of the alcoholic family man, but the intimate details of this particular family – the wife's predicament, the impact on the children, how close he is to losing his job, and so on.

The point at which a problem drinker becomes a problem coincides with that moment where the spatial, temporal and moral practical boundaries of the public house can no longer accommodate the problem, when the problem drinker becomes adrift from the community of drinkers and the normal practices of drinking and sociability within which the problem drinker, too, has his or her place, a symbolically and normatively bounded place, which the problem drinker too can rely upon for an order. To take a famous but characteristic example, James Joyce, declining psychoanalysis, described himself to Carl Jung as an ordinary lower middle-class man, with alcoholic tendencies (Ellmann, 1983: 430). Joyce balanced precariously on the threshold of alcoholism all of his adult life and battled to 'hold it together'. He confined his drinking to the public spaces of café-bars in Trieste, Paris and Zurich, seldom if ever drinking at home. Similarly, Baudelaire assiduously avoided drinking at home or on his own, and imbibed only in the café-bar or at the *club des haschichins*. Baudelaire and Joyce both relied on the public culture of the café-bar and the public house to help them govern their fatal attraction to excess and their appetite for infinity, the thirst that is impossible to slake.

THE STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE PUBLIC HOUSE

One of the most significant transformations in the institution of the Irish pub has been the decline of the pub as a family business and the weakening institution of the publican as responsible licensee, increasingly replaced by the professional bar manager fronting a business corporation, a company usually holding a portfolio of pubs and other commercial interests. Like the eclipse of the institution of the independent newspaper by the media industry and the family farm by modern agribusiness, we see also the eclipse of the local pub by the super-pub, a process of economic modernisation analagous to the eclipse of the grocer by the supermarket in the provisions trade as a function of ongoing rationalisation and economies of scale, a process of modernisation accelerated during periods of boom.[4]

The Licensing Acts of 1998 and 2002 represent the neoliberal deregulation of the licensing laws of 1870 and 1902 (Cassidy, 2002). The new laws reduce the barriers governing entry to the trade by removing the stipulation that a new licence is contingent upon the acquisition, closure and transfer of an existing licence or licences. It also involves the multiplication of types of licences – for pubs, restaurants, off-licences, night clubs, wine bars, café-bars and the multiplication of places where alcohol is sold – supermarkets and groceries, corner stores, garages.[5] Thus, under the neoliberal licensing acts the *space* where alcohol is made available is greatly expanded. Further, the dimension of *time* is destructured by licence extensions and exemptions. Regular opening and closing times are expanded and flexibilised for night clubs, late bars, parties, promotions and events, and availing of this de-structuration as an opportunity for reconstruction, the architectural design of pubs changes in marvellous and ingenious ways. The contemporary neoliberal super-pub resembles a 'transformer', 'morphing' from breakfast venues to lunchtime carverys into afternoon cafés; becoming standard pubs in the evenings, transforming into night clubs at 11.30 pm and finally shutting down, briefly, at 3.00 am.[6]

The transformation of the pub from the traditional local to the global super-pub entails a spatial and temporal decontainment of alcohol consumption. This decontainment of consumption has pathological consequences at the level of individual and collective bodies politic in the form of the public health epidemics of alcohol abuse, anti-social behaviour, family breakup, violent disorder, drink-driving, and so on. The extension and expansion to industrial scale

poses problems for the dramaturgy of the scene as the key actors – publican, bartenders and regulars – cannot interact. In most cases the publican, who, as responsible licensee is both key actor and stage director, withdraws entirely from the stage and scene. He is replaced by a bar manager and staff, typically young, minimum wage, frequently migrant workers, hired on a temporary or casual basis, non-unionised and chronically insecure, who, as the tempo of work accelerates and the volume of product shifted increases, have no time to converse with customers (and in many super-pubs are explicitly prohibited from doing so). Thus, they become simply 'hands' that work the taps and tills. Communication is further eliminated by playing music at high volume, increasing consumption as, unable to speak or listen to others, customers drink more. For the same reason seats and tables are removed to maximise space on the shopfloor, and lacking tables on which to place their glasses, drinking is intensified. Thus the public house ceases to be an institution of the public sphere where communication, sociability and conviviality are facilitated by alcohol consumption, moderated and normatively governed by the dramaturgy of the scene, and becomes a streamlined industrialised space dedicated to maximising the production and consumption of product by systematically and deliberately eliminating the communicative actions that may otherwise govern consumption.

A further twist in the dialectics of drinking and the structural transformation of the public house is the tendency towards the desertion of the pub in favour of drinking at home. The obvious causes to which this tendency are attributed are oversimplified: increased prices and taxation are felt to be responsible, but the demand curve for alcohol, like tobacco, is relatively inelastic – while pub sales are down by as much as 25 per cent, off-licence sales are up by an equal or greater amount. The smoking ban, which Ireland was the first to introduce, achieved almost immediate total compliance, but it resulted in 'smoking shelters', creating new venues and forms of sociability such as 'smirting' (smoking and flirting). The desertion of the public house in favour of the private house has much more to do with the structural transformation of an essential institution of the public sphere so that it no longer serves the needs of communicatively mediated, normatively governed cultural reproduction and sociable interaction. As a defensive gesture people attempt to use their private spaces as loci of sociability that the pub formerly provided, so that 'staying in is the new going out'. But this generates a new set of problems, since the house party, with its necessarily

restricted circle of guests, is no substitute for the pub in terms of its socialising effects of cultivating the skills and capacities for tolerance and free-form interaction. Drinking at the private house party as opposed to going 'down the pub' exacerbates rather than alleviates the tendency towards egoism, privatisation and possessive individualism in the wider society. And, more pertinent to our present concern with the epidemic of problem drinking, the private house party enjoys no protection by exterior limitations. The private host plays the role of 'publican' to the guests and must regulate both host's and guests' consumption, but as a consumer the host lacks the sober and professional objectivity that the publican relies upon, as well as any recourse to a legal framework governing opening times and closing times or formal sanctions that he or she can either implicitly or explicitly invoke. The responsibility for the management of the potential social costs of alcohol are thereby transferred from the alcohol industry and from the state and from the public sphere, and displaced into the realm least equipped to cope with them and most in need of protection, namely the domestic house and the private sphere. As the public house becomes hyper-rationalised and loses its function as an institution of the public sphere, drinking at home in the domestic house also becomes decontained, colonising and contaminating the private sphere. Private houses become shebeens, and run the risk of becoming again the unruly and disorderly houses of the eighteenth century.

CODEPENDENCY, WELFARE AND GLOBALISATION

The state and the alcohol industry have developed a relationship of codepencency. As alcohol regulator the state prevents market entry by moonshiners and unlicensed distributors, protecting the markets of producers and traders in return for a very considerable revenue take. But the state takes on board the burden of risk that the trade in alcohol entails, risks formerly borne by industry. For example, Guinness had an extensive programme of industrial philanthropy throughout its corporate history, from the late eighteenth century, throughout the nineteenth and well into the late twentieth centuries, ranging from social security (pensions schemes for its employees), housing, hospitals, education and benevolent funds, to, infamously, hostels for the swelling ranks of indigent alcoholics that its monopoly on the Dublin market had produced.[7] The current owner of Guinness (Diageo) is a multinational global corporation, whose dispersed trans-

national corporate structure ensures that it is relatively immune from national revenue systems. Unlike Guinness, Diageo and other global alcohol corporations not only pay minimal to zero corporate taxes for their operations and sales in Ireland (the tax-take is transferred to the price the consumer pays), but their globally dispersed and anonymous corporate shareholders are entirely distanced spatially and politically from the diseconomies and social costs of their activities.

With the development of the apparatus of welfare, the nation state took a systematic, centralised approach to the diseconomies of alcohol, taxing both industry and consumers, using the revenue stream from alcohol to underwrite and redistribute resources to control social costs. With the crisis of the welfare state (Offe, 1984a) and legitimation crisis (Habermas, 1976b) the state seeks systematically to distance itself from social problems and diseconomies, disburdening itself of costly responsibilities. This becomes exacerbated under conditions of globalisation, where the revenue base of the (national) welfare state is undermined by the global organisation of corporate activities, and the global corporation avoids paying taxes locally while costs, risks and diseconomies are still experienced locally (Mishra, 1999; Beck, 2000). The transnationalisation of the global alcohol industry means a radical reduction of the alcohol industry's contribution to the national revenue base, and the transfer of the tax burden from production to consumption. As it cannot tax global corporate producers, the state increases taxation of local labour or, more commonly, indirect taxation on consumers. It deregulates licensing laws to increase consumption, but it cannot afford to pick up the tab for the increased social costs in public health, law and order and social damage. The burden of risk and responsibility is transferred from the global corporate producer to the local supplier, the publican. But the state depends upon the vintners' prosperity, and the vintners are a powerful political lobby, so the burden of risk is transferred further down the line, onto the individual private consumer, who incurs the risk of drinking more, and also the responsibility for drinking more responsibly.

THE MUTATION OF THE MEAL AND THE EPIDEMIC OF OVEREATING

Let us bring this discussion to bear now on the question of obesity, one of the most characteristic epidemics of an age of globalised mass consumerism, an urgent public health crisis in Ireland as elsewhere, where 40 per cent of the adult population are overweight and many

grossly or morbidly so; a society with the fastest growing obesity rates amongst children, especially amongst the under 12s. Obesity has been described in the literatures of medicine, epidemiology and public health, nutrition, pedagogy and political economy. Within these discourses the problem is formulated in terms of, variously: a moral panic; amplified by the hegemony of an unrealistic and oppressive ideal body type; caused by poor diet, fast food, confectionary, and an industrially processed food chain; as a function of increased caloric intake coupled with a sedentary lifestyle and car-based commuter culture; and as an ideological problem, affecting only a privileged minority, blinding us to the real problem of malnutrition and starvation for the majority of the world's population in the increasingly polarised world of globalisation. But obesity also has a sociological explanation. Obesity in the affluent consumer societies of globalised late modernity is a social pathology, a symptom of a moral crisis. It is the result of the de-structuration of the social institution that governs individual appetite and food consumption, that regulates desires and that integrates the individual into a healthy, balanced collective social body. The shared meal, one of the most fundamental and universal social institutions, the institution that functions to regulate consumption in terms of time and space, quantity and quality, surplus and waste, portion and proportion, becomes de-structured under conditions of accelerated modernisation, so that food intake becomes individualised, deregulated and decontained. Further, and more fundamentally, obesity is a manifestation of misplaced or misdirected appetite, a hunger that has 'taken the wrong path' (1999: 31) in Baudelaire's terms. Obesity is symptomatic of desire for an ideal form that is prematurely cathected into material content (food in this instance) and cannot find satisfaction there. Modern consumer society is perpetually and insatiably hungry. The essential question is, 'hungry for what?' What value is really sought in the over-consumption of food? What moral form (moral fibre, perhaps) is food an always-inadequate substitute for? What higher ideal, what good, is left in abeyance – calling out for more – in our insatiable, ravenous appetite for such fetishes as perfect pasta or sushi; authentic Provence/Thai/Indian; organic, slow, unadulterated and pure food; or perhaps most commonly of all, our desire for real, wholesome, home cooked food – 'soul food': good food as a simulacrum and substitute for the good life.

THE SYMBOLIC ORDER AND
COMMUNICATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE MEAL

In 'Deciphering a Meal' Douglas (1975) reiterates and elaborates her classic interpretation of the Hebrew food rules of Leviticus and Deuteronomy presented in *Purity and Danger* (1966). 'Food', she says, 'is a code; the messages it encodes will be found in the patterns of social relations being expressed' (1975: 249). Eating, like talking, is a patterned, rule-governed symbolic activity, and a menu, a cuisine, the manners and rituals of food preparation, distribution and consumption are a complex of communicative action. Like a linguistic speech act, a meal has a symbolic order, a lexicon, a taxonomy, a grammar, an anthropologically deep-seated universal pragmatics. Like the culture of drinking and the structural transformation of the public house, when we examine the culture of eating and the fate of the meal under conditions of globalisation we find a similar structural transformation, decontainment and symbolic mutation. What characterises the meal under contemporary conditions is spatial dislocation, dispersal and temporal fragmentation, i.e. a structural disassembly of the grammar of the meal such that the meal becomes incoherent and meaningless, and ultimately unfulfilling, as the culture of eating devolves to mere feeding.

Simmel (1997: 130) sees what he calls 'the immeasurable sociological significance of the meal' as anchored in its inextricable and anthropologically deep-seated connection to a universal material need, such that 'the ultimate heights of morality are directly conditioned by the dark regions and depths of our existence' (Simmel, 1997: 134).

The fact that we must eat is a fact of life situated so primitively and elementarily in the development of our life-values that it is unquestionably shared by each individual with every other one. This is precisely what makes gathering together for a shared meal possible in the first place, and the transcendence of the mere naturalism of eating develops out of the socialization mediated in this way. If eating were not so elemental it would not have found this bridge that elevates it to the significance of the sacrificial meal – to a stylization and aestheticization of its ultimate forms. (Simmel, 1997: 135)

The sacrificial meal is the central common element of the cults of antiquity and primitive religions. Even though – by definition – participants at the feast are eating individual portions of food and drink, eating the same food and drinking the same drink from the same table or from the same pot gives rise to the primitive notion that

one is thereby creating common flesh and blood, Simmel explains. In ancient Judaism the fraternal bond was signified by common access to God's table. 'Communal eating and drinking, which can even transform a mortal enemy into a friend for the Arab, unleashes an immense socializing power' (Simmel, 1997: 131). This immense socialising power reaches an apotheosis in the Christian Eucharist.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION: THE SHARED MEAL AND THE MIRACLE OF SOCIETY

The shared meal miraculously transubstantiates matter into ideal form. The Christian Eucharist, iconically represented by da Vinci's *Last Supper* and commemorated in the ritual of consecration and the sacrament of Holy Communion, is a paradigmatic example. Christ breaks bread and gives it to his disciples, saying, 'Take this, all of you and eat it, for this is my body which shall be given up for you.' Through the communicative action of the shared meal the participants constitute and become imbued with the Holy Spirit, the ideal transcendent form that unites their society, a church that protects, fortifies, nourishes and sustains them, a spirit that gives everlasting life. While this may be a paradigmatic example, all religions have a sacrificial/celebrational meal at their very centre, as the meal is the ritual commemoration of gift exchange and the sacrifice that gift-giving entails – surplus accumulated, food set aside, immediate bodily appetite denied in favour of communication with the Gods, ancestors, children, friends and even strangers. The gift is a total social fact, an anthropological universal, an act that is at once economic and political, practical and aesthetic, moral and juridical; an act that communicatively and symbolically establishes and institutionalises the virtues of shared labour and mutual accumulation, the principles of reciprocity and solidarity, the rules of justice in portioning and distribution, the legitimation of hierarchy and the order of the cosmos; the fundamental elements of the sacred institution of society which are commemorated, celebrated and reinstitutionalised at every shared meal.

The miracle of transubstantiation in the Christian Eucharist whereby content becomes transcendent form, matter becomes ideal substance, is an apotheosis of the gift relation and its role in constituting the transcendent ideal of society. The Eucharist constitutes a watershed in the civilising process. But it is neither the only moment nor an ontologically essential moment. Simmel traces a long history

of secular equivalents, in what Elias would later call the civilising process – the dining rituals of the guilds of the Middle Ages, the drinking rules of English workingmen's clubs, and so on – a historical sociology reaching another, modern apotheosis in the formalities of the meal, in the refinements of table manners and conventions of bourgeois modernity. For Simmel the progressive institutionalisation of the meal represents the secular expression of the essential moral ideals expressed in the religious conception of the Eucharist. The development and refinement of bourgeois table manners and the conventions of dinner-time conversation, for example, by their conventionality and banality harmonise and unify the diversity of individual personalities by constituting a uniformity, homogeneity, a space that transcends individual particularity and constitutes society. The individual place setting, for example, and in particular the plate, symbolises the order which gives to the needs of the individual that which is coming to the individual as part of the structured whole but, in return, does not allow the individual to encroach beyond his or her limits. Each step in this process, Simmel says, 'leads the meal upwards towards the immediate and symbolic expression of higher, synthetic social values' (Simmel, 1997: 133).

The shared meal is a communicative action that symbolically transforms material content (food) into ideal form (society). But when the shared meal is spatially and temporally de-structured, deinstitutionalised, reindividualised, as it is increasingly under conditions of accelerated modernisation/globalisation, it loses its capacity for transubstantiation, leaving us unsatisfied and hungry. According to O'Neill, this is the most far reaching of the many deleterious effects of the 'MacDonaldisation' of society (2002). More recently, the transformation of work under the third spirit of capitalism – blue collar 'flexibilisation' and white collar 'self-directed' hyper-individuation (Petersen and Wilig, 2004), results in casualised and unstructured eating 'on the job' for the proletariat (Qvortrup, 2006) and the instrumentalisation of dining – breakfast meetings, power lunches and corporate dinners for management. Changing structures of family life – ranging from the dissolution of the extended family of the nineteenth century, and later the mid-twentieth-century nuclear family, to the contemporary dual-income, decentred or multi-centred family – mean that family eating has become increasingly free-form, shared meals becoming infrequent and reserved for special occasions. It is not only that individual appetite is decontained by the destructuration of the institution of the meal, but, more funda-

mentally, decontainment means that hunger for social form that the shared meal seeks and achieves cannot be satisfied, as solitary and commodified eating (and drinking) cannot transubstantiate mere content and cannot generate ideal form of the transcendent collective body of society.

Another way of looking at binge drinking and overeating is as an example of the insatiability of the modern subject in the context of the empty promises of consumer culture to 'fulfil all needs and wants'. Layard (2005) makes the argument that beyond the satisfaction of basic needs, as societies become richer, they become less happy, an argument that rests on the hierarchy of basic needs outlined by Maslow, which, in ascending hierarchical order, are: biological (air, food, drink, etc.), safety (protection from the elements), love and belongingness (work, family relationships), self-esteem (achievement and status) and self-actualisation (realising personal potential). Layard's argument rests upon the claim that beyond the realisation of the most basic needs, affluence tends to have an individualising, fragmenting effect on individuals' lives whereby we are gripped by a 'zero sum game of competition for money and happiness' (2005: 5) that paradoxically undermines the achievement of that very goal. In his book *Luxury Fever*, Frank (2000) makes the same claim, arguing that although the rich are significantly happier than the poor within any country at any moment, average happiness levels change very little as people's incomes rise in tandem over time, an argument that is reinforced by others who argue that happiness is related to relative rather than absolute income. All three of these authors illustrate a fundamental paradox inherent in the libidinal economy of contemporary consumer society: the more we try to capture the object of our desire through unbridled consumption, the more it eludes us.

A Lacanian model of the paradoxical nature of desire clearly illustrates the insatiability of the modern subject in the context of consumer society, for within this model (like in Aesop's classic story of the tortoise and the hare) 'the object cause is always missed; all we can do is encircle it … the object of desire that eludes our grasp no matter what we do to attain it' (Žižek, 1991: 4). The very search for love, or connection, is a fantasy construction which hides a fundamental lack; the process itself produces the object which causes it, for in his words, 'we mistake the searching and indecision proper to desire, with what is, in fact, the realisation of desire', and therefore we confuse the goal with the aim (Žižek, 1991: 7). In Frank's view

the problem occurs when the very means by which we fulfil these particular physiological, safety, belongingness, esteem and actualisation needs – consumption – becomes an end in itself, becomes conspicuous, overliteralised, a tendency which misrecognises the paradoxical relationship between desire and the object cause which it produces, and we fail to see that the object – happiness – is retroactively constructed by our desire. As Frank puts it, past a certain point of meeting basic needs, we should use the increase in our incomes to buy more of certain 'inconspicuous goods', such as 'freedom from a long commute or a stressful job, which will enable us to devote time to family friends, exercise, sleep, travel and other restorative activities' (Hennigan in Frank, 2004: 69). Thus, the Lacanian paradox inherent in the search for happiness, love, intimacy and so on, is that we lose the very cherished object when we fixate upon it, for 'the paradox of these states is that although they are what matters most, they elude us as soon as we make them the immediate aim of our activity' (Žižek, 1991: 77). 'We must not', in Žižek's words, 'obliterate the distance separating the Real from its symbolization: it is this surplus of the Real over every symbolization that functions as the object-cause of desire' (Žižek, 1989: 3). Love, happiness or satisfaction are by-products, innermost emotions that cannot be planned in advance or assumed by means of conscious decision, yet consumer society advances the pervasive myth that satisfaction can be achieved by consumption, and that eating, drinking, buying and shopping will provide us with a spiritual satisfaction and fill our inner lack.

THE APPETITE FOR INFINITY AND THE INSATIABILITY OF MODERNITY

In part, the epidemic of binge drinking and overeating in contemporary Irish society can be seen in the context of a more generalised malaise of modernity articulated in different ways by Benjamin, Baudelaire and Durkheim. This problem, the opposition between the individual's desires and the collective morality of the group, Durkheim says, becomes the generalised condition of modern humanity. Durkheim identified the risk associated with the predicament of the individual for whom the ties of social integration to family and community are few and whose moral frameworks have been loosened – egoism and anomie – and as a consequence of excessive individualism and insufficient moral restraint, egoistic desires become boundless and limitless, and without limit desires can never be satisfied. Insatiability, Durkheim says, is always a sign of morbidity, and in this case morbid insatiability is the characteristic individual symptomatic

manifestation of the moral pathologies of modernity. Freed from the religious ties of community, modern people who transgress and seek to transcend conventional morality are condemned to wander, and, living in disorder and anti-structure, they have to try to make out their own destiny, all the while fleeing from the infinity that they carry within themselves. The tragedy of modernity is that the pursuit of ideals puts modern people on a road that may lead to the modern hell of insatiable desires that rage from '*l'infini que vous portez en vous*': 'that which is in you more than yourself', passion 'provoked by something intangible and intensified by the very impossibility of fulfilment' (Lacan, 1979: 268). The moral problem of modern civilisation according to Durkheim (1975) and Foucault (1998) is how to redeem modernity from perdition by helping us to understand our insatiability so that we are not slaves to our appetites, and to reorient our desire towards higher ideals and the realisation of the good life.

As Benjamin and Baudelaire illustrate, one of the key paradoxes of the modern subject is also our ambivalence to the infinite nature of our own desires, and the thin line between self-expression or experimentation and hedonistic excess. Walter Benjamin's critique of the city as a phantasmagoria of consumption is premised on Baudelaire's *poiesis* of the insatiable hunger that animates the spirit of modernity. The city (Paris, the prototype and ideal type of modern city) is the place where *le gôut pour l'infini* is cultivated and amplified, a 'thirst that is impossible to slake', most obviously the addictions of various sorts – alcohol, hash, opiates, cocaine, ecstasy; but also pornography, the spectacle of entertainment, shopping, sports, mass consumption and at the outer fringes 'edge' pursuits – ultra violence, nihilism and death. Baudelaire says that *le gôut pour l'infini* – the taste/appetite/hunger for infinity – is the source of *les fleurs du mal* of modern society. As the fate of Baudelaire's heroines Delphine and Hyppolite illustrate (lesbian lovers who defy tradition in the name of love, but who are thereafter forced to live as outsiders), those who defy tradition pay a high price, as do all modern people who live in a world where the constraints of conventional religion and morality have been loosened, and where the individual is the measure of morality. Baudelaire shows how the more the commodity form is perfected, as a heady liquor or a gastronomic delight, the more refined and precious, honed and remastered the product becomes; at the same time as it becomes mass-produced for individualised mass consumption, it simultaneously becomes boring and unsatisfying. Humanity's vices, Baudelaire says in the *Artificial Paradises*, contain

the proof (even if only in their infinite capacity for expansion!) of his taste for the infinite, but it is a taste which often takes the wrong path. Contemporary critiques of consumer society reiterate this theme in their simultaneous valorisation of consumer society for its ability to articulate and express individual and collective identity, and criticism of consumer society for revealing the insatiability of consumer desire.

However, the problem of the spiritual and moral vacuum at the heart of globalised modernity/consumer society and the absence of any 'higher' spiritual ideals can also be located in conditions associated with the rise of flexibilised work in contemporary Ireland. For instance, a substantial proportion of the job growth in Ireland since the 1990s is due to the rise in part-time, casual, fixed-term, temporary and self-employed contracting work (O'Hearn, 2003:42) and, in particular, a rise in jobs in the service sector, forms of work which tend to be low paid, and which provide low job security and minimal workers' rights. These developments in Ireland are consistent with the global restructuring of industry which has resulted in a worldwide shift towards post-Fordist organisation, 'just-in-time', 'lean' production techniques, outsourcing, etc., and which has resulted in a highly segmented or fragmented labour market whereby opportunities for collective identity formation and individual self-realisation are no longer possible. These conditions of fragmentation combined with the increasing intrusion of agendas of efficiency and productivity into personal and occupational life (which is an inevitable effect of market globalisation) result in the erosion of the 'accomplishment principle' that characterises the contemporary organisation of work under conditions of globalisation (Petersen and Willig, 2004: 239).

Honneth (1995) emphasises how the growth in the service sector in postindustrial society results not only in the expansion of a more temporary, part-time and insecure job sector, but also strongly curtails possibilities for self-realisation in workers in this area, since this sector lacks clear and uncontroversial criteria for economic efficiency, and therefore lacks possibilities for receiving recognition (Petersen and Willig, 2004: 340). Moreover, as the rise of postindustrial, service-based work or abstract financial 'speculation' displaces industrial work and its associated traditional versions of self-realisation and morality based on 'hard work', we no longer have a clear occupational grounding with which to cultivate our self-identity or that serves as the basis for inter-subjective recognition. Petersen and Willig put

this succinctly when stating, 'This is due not just to the demise of industrial work, but also to the growing possibilities of financial rewards which are difficult to justify; those accrued from the furious ups and downs of the stock market, increasing real estate speculation, and state and media sponsored competitions, where success is wholly down to luck rather than to any notion of accomplishment' (2004: 341). This new organisation of work leads to a greater sense of status confusion, disorientation, and a rise in psychological disturbances (Petersen and Willig, 2004). In the Irish context, these disturbances are manifest in binge drinking and overeating.

CONCLUSION

If the deep source of the epidemics of binge drinking and overeating is located in the moral lack of modern civilisation, a problem exacerbated by the anomic and egoistic currents of globalisation, wherein might we begin to locate responses to these current public health problems? Paradoxically, the modern individual may be the locus of values and the pursuit of the ideal – social differentiation and moral refinement – Simmel says, because 'individuals freed from historical bonds now wished to distinguish themselves from one another. The carrier of man's values is no longer "the general human being" in every individual, but rather mans' qualitative uniqueness and irreplaceablity' (1997: 185). The amplified emphasis on the recognition of particularity and uniqueness, the accentuated and insatiable taste for differentiation and the imperative of self-realisation, while these may appear to be the most pernicious manifestations of monadic liberal individualism, the motivations underpinning fashion and consumerism and the vices of conceit, vanity and unbridled egoism that characterise the political culture of modern civilisation are equally bearers of our highest ideals and our aspirations for the good life. For Durkheim, 'all development of individualism has the effect of opening moral consciousness to new ideas and making it more demanding. Since every advance that it makes results in a higher conception, a more delicate sense of the dignity of man, individualism cannot be developed without making apparent to us as contrary to human dignity as unjust, social relations that at one time did not seem unjust at all' (1973: 12). We have seen how this opportunity for cultivating cosmopolitan virtue and moral development is squandered in the case of multicultural Ireland's immigration policy. Where else may we try to build cosmopolitan civic virtues and moral anchors in the stormy seas of globalisation?

In the long course of human civilisation, Durkheim says, 'certain moral ideas became united with certain religious ideas to such an extent as to become indistinct from them' (1973: 8). But 'if the eminent dignity [sacredness, transcendent reality] attributed to moral rules has, up to the present time, only been expressed in the form of religious conceptions, it does not follow that it cannot be otherwise expressed' (Durkheim, 1973: 10).

When Durkheim was faced with the task of formulating a programme of moral education to counteract problems of suicide, sectarian scapegoating, criminality and other symptomatic manifestations of egoism and anomie in the Third Republic, he didn't argue for a conservative restoration of the institutions of religious life. On the contrary, he argued for a radical modern progressivism that would transcend traditional religions by distilling their moral essence and formulating rational substitutes for them. The cosmopolitan morality that would be a rational substitutions for religion, Durkheim argued, would be found in the organic solidarity of peoples' mutual recognition of their interdependency upon one another through the division of labour. A radical modern progressivism such as that envisaged by Durkheim must begin with an awareness of the need for both redistribution and recognition, which we will discuss in more detail in the following chapters.

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Part 4

Beyond 'Consumer Citizenship' and Neoliberalism: Cosmopolitanising Ireland

7
Social Welfare and Redistribution: Taxation and Civic Health

Orienting Questions

- What is the 'welfare state compromise'?
- How does globalisation transform taxation?
- How does the national welfare state fare in an age of globalisation?
- How does neoliberalism impact on health and wellbeing?
- What alternatives are there to the neoliberal agenda?

As a state currently committed to neoliberal economic policy at the expense of social cohesion and welfare, contemporary Ireland is anti-cosmopolitan. Despite the current representations of Ireland as cosmopolitan, all of the preceding chapters in this book illustrate that this is not the case. Chapter 1 demonstrated how rising levels of economic productivity have been accompanied by an increase in levels of social inequality. Chapter 2 illustrated how political corruption is endemic to our current political culture. Chapter 3 has shown how despite the fact that much of the fuel behind the Celtic Tiger economic boom can be attributed to migrant workers, the current work permit system and the recent citizenship referendum both exhibit an opportunistic and exclusionary attitude towards non-nationals, and explicitly promote mono- rather than multiculturalism. In Chapter 4, we showed that many representations of Irishness are still based on an idealised, homogenised and romantic notion of Irishness that does not correspond to the reality of the multicultural, 'new' Irish population. In Chapter 5, we showed how contrary to this image of Ireland as a cosmopolitan nation with a high quality of life, there is a high incidence of depression in Ireland that can be related to the anomic effects of rapid social change. And in Chapter 6, we demonstrated how binge drinking and overeating can also be seen as symptoms of this anomie, and also as symptoms of the fragmenting effects of globalisation. As we will show in this chapter, the transfer of the tax burden from the business corporation to the private individual is distinctly anti-cosmopolitan.

Our central argument in this and the next chapter is that collective wellbeing in Ireland cannot be achieved without reconceptualising Irish society within the cosmopolitan paradigms of redistribution and recognition. Achieving civic health and collective wellbeing in Ireland requires cultivating a notion of civic health that is based on redistribution in terms of a more equitable taxation system. In the next chapter we will demonstrate the link between wellbeing and recognition, both in terms of the need to confer recognition onto the 'new Irish' of migrant labourers and refugees, and the need to cultivate modes of recognition as well for all individuals in Ireland whose self-identity has been challenged by the fragmenting effects of globalisation; by workplace contexts which militate against solidarity, satisfaction and a sense of continuity.

Although as noted in Chapter 1, there are a variety of contradictory and complex discourses on the Celtic Tiger, the hegemonic discourse of Irish modernity is driven by neoliberal rather than a reflexive modernisation imperative. Social policy analysts have pointed out that the Irish welfare state was never particularly strong, but the opportunities produced by the Celtic Tiger economic boom could have been used to develop aspects of the Irish infrastructure that would facilitate social integration such as public services (i.e. health care, social housing, public transport, etc.), and to begin the process of developing a strong version of the welfare state. In contrast to the current claims of the potentially positive effects of globalisation on Irish society on quality of life in Ireland, this chapter will argue that neoliberal policies which have pursued economic growth at the expense of social cohesion are to a large part responsible for the problems impacting negatively on quality of life in Ireland, problems which can only be reversed through pursuit of a more equitable taxation system, and through the pursuit of what O'Neill (2004a) calls a 'civic health' agenda. This chapter will critique the inequalities reproduced by the current Irish taxation system and its entrenched inequalities on the basis of the growing body of work that has illustrated how social inequality threatens civic health and collective wellbeing (see Wilkinson, 1996; Kawachi and Kennedy, 2002; O'Neill, 2004a).

REGRESSIVE TAXATION AND THE DECIVILISING PROCESS OF GLOBALISATION

The most common analysis of the Celtic Tiger is grounded in neoclassical economics and attributes the economic success to

efficient markets of all types, which have created high productivity and low costs, fuelled by a government that has reimagined its role as primarily about ensuring that markets operate efficiently, rather than as a player in the market, buying and providing services for its citizens. This neoliberal ethos crystallised in the political arena in 1985 when a new party, the Progressive Democrats, was formed with an agenda focused on reducing government expenditure and taxation, and increasing the rights of the individual. Though small in size, this party has been in government since 1989 (save for the period 1992 to 1997), while its low taxation policy has been embraced and implemented by all of the other major parties (the top marginal rate of individual taxation dropped from 65 per cent in 1985 to 42 per cent in 2006). In many ways, this hegemonic discourse in contemporary Irish political culture is in continuity with the Regan-Thatcher ethos that saw the state as the cause of, rather than the solution to, the economy's problems. The shift from direct taxation on wages to indirect taxation on goods and services, and the transfer of the tax burden from the business corporation to the private individual, have remained the most consistent and universal features of the fiscal culture of neoliberal globalisation over the past 25 years (Beck, 2000). Economic statistics of Ireland's success mask the reality that a multinational corporation can avail of Ireland's low corporate tax environment to post high profits earned by the simple mechanism of buying and selling goods from and to its own corporate subsidiaries. Thus, Ireland exemplifies the late capitalist economy because of its reliance on multinational capital, but also because the economic data that gilds the Celtic Tiger misrepresents much of what is happening, such as a weak indigenous sector providing low-paid service jobs, a growing disparity between rich and poor, and the unwillingness of government adequately to address social and economic inequities.

Currently, there are difficulties in negotiating the next stage of world trade talks due to the US and EU farm interests successfully blocking deregulation on the one hand, and an emerging consolidation of an anti-globalisation bloc, particularly in Latin America, on the other, which together may indicate that globalisation may have reached a plateau and may be on the cusp of retraction. Speaking in this context, Dan O'Brien, senior editor at the EIU observes that this may 'presage a period of de-globalization, in which Ireland will suffer disproportionately':

Ireland's tigerish success has flowed from making itself a hub in economic activity between two regions, Europe and the US. Though embedded in the European single market, Ireland's manufacturing base is, to all intents and purposes, US owned, its export success US driven and its rise up the value chain US fuelled. If corporate America were compelled to disengage from Ireland, the economy would suffere a decline of a structural nature considerably more serious than the sort of slump that would take place if the property market were to pop.[1]

The extreme vulnerability of Ireland's economy to fluctuations and antinomies of globalisation can be gauged by the fact that the Irish economy counts both microchips and PCs amongst its biggest exports. Two companies in the IT sector, Intel and Dell, are the two largest exporters in the country. Dell alone counts for 5.5 per cent of all Irish exports, 2 per cent of the value of all goods and services produced in Ireland and over 4 per cent of all expenditure in the Irish economy. Dell employs 4,300 and Intel employs 4,800 in their Irish operations. The fortunes of both companies are closely intertwined as Dell is Intel's biggest customer. But Dell's share price halved in 2005–6 as the PC market in the US and the EU reached total penetration levels, and the lead in next generation machines has been taken by China: 25 per cent of all laptops sold worldwide in 2006 were made in Taiwan and mainland China, designed and manufactured by the Taipai-based firm Quanta.[2] To stay in the game Dell has to cut costs, and that means moving to a low-wages economy, preferably one that is closer to emerging markets. Relocation of its core activities in manufacturing and distribution to Eastern Europe or to India is virtually certain within the next few years, though no doubt a minor but crucial corporate accountancy function will remain in Ireland in the IFSC, to avail of Irish tax advantages while funnelling profits from global operations back to the US.

The Irish tax model is a system of asymmetrical gift exchange: tax breaks for global corporations are exchanged for jobs, which are highly taxed and deeply insecure. What is most significant about this model is that there is a transfer of the tax burden from the corporate sector to the individual. Direct (income) and indirect (stealth) taxes on consumers represent a transfer of wealth from poor to rich – negative taxation, a form of 'theft relation' (see Chapter 3). As we shall see, the gift relation that underpins all taxation increases solidarity, but the theft relation that characterises tax design in Celtic Tiger, globalised Ireland erodes social cohesion and increases social conflict.

TAXATION AND THE CIVILISING PROCESS

In order to analyse the subject of taxation, and its centrality to Ireland's purported success and the broader contexts of the wellbeing of the Irish body politic and our quality of life, we will sketch a broad canvas which traces the history of taxation and illustrates the reciprocal function of taxation, a function that is currently endangered.

According to Habermas (1991: 17), 'The modern state was basically a state based on taxation, the bureaucracy of the treasury the true core of its administration'. In his analysis of the 'civilizing process' Elias (1991) provides the definitive historical-sociological support for Habermas's claim that the history of the modern state is the history of taxation. Elias argues that the two most significant processes in the history of state formation have been the sociogenesis of the state's monopoly on violence, and the state's monopoly on taxation. Focusing mostly on the sociogenesis of the monopoly on taxation in northern Europe, and France in particular, during the Middle Ages, Elias traces the gradual consolidation of the institutional apparatus of taxation associated with kings and other feudal lords. The Crusades required the systematic levying of extraordinary taxes to fund the protracted expeditions, as did the Hundred Years War shortly thereafter. During this time, the use of taxation to raise additional revenues from the feudal lords' estates became a permanent feature of feudal life. In the twelfth century, Elias says, the emerging town dwellers, the bourgeois, began to be enrolled for war duties. 'Very soon however, the town-dwellers prefer to offer the territorial lord money instead of war services so that he can hire warriors. They commercialise war service … [which] quickly becomes an institution. The king's representatives demand from each town community such and such a number of men or the payment of a corresponding sum for a particular campaign, and the towns agree or negotiate a reduction' (Elias, 1991: 423). Of course this is not an altogether harmonious tax situation. Conflict amongst rival feudal lords is ongoing, demanding continuous and gradually increasing sums of money, and the kings cannot afford to provoke excessive opposition amongst their revenue bases, as their grip on power is often quite tenuous. Under the pressure of this situation the royal tax collectors 'grope for one solution after another, shifting the tax burden now onto this urban or other class, now that' – a duty on the pound for all wares sold; one-off, lump sum payments and thereafter freedom from tax; compulsory loans from wealthy bourgeois; flat-rate

taxes on households; poll taxes and so on. And then as now, there was resistance, tax revolts and dissent between different social strata: 'taxes form the nodal point where both the interdependence and the antitheses emerge particularly clearly. … The middle and lower groups seek direct, progressive taxes which each pays according to his means, while the urban upper stratum prefers indirect or flat rate taxes' (Elias, 1995: 429).

Elias also argues that the issue of taxation was central to the democratic revolution, and thus to the transformation from feudalism to capitalist modernity. According to Elias, internal dissent amongst urban communities and rivalry between towns favoured the consolidation and centralisation of both military and fiscal power in the royal households, to the point where, in the mid-fifteenth century, the king could declare that taxation was now a permanent institution of rule and no longer a matter for debate and negotiation between the nobility and the other estates (Elias, 1995: 431). Centuries before it became a prison, the fortress of the Bastille was constructed as a central Treasury, and the *gens d'arme* were established as its standing armed guard. From there on the central government began quite openly to announce and collect taxes permanently without the estates' agreement. But, as the weakest estate, least able to offer resistance to the central power, the tax burden was disproportionately borne not by the burgers of the towns or by the church, but by the common people. A Venetian envoy reporting on the new situation in France observed that 'the king, being militarily powerful, obtains money through his people's obedience, for if he so wishes he can increase the taxes. Whatever burdens he places upon them, they pay. … the section of the population which bears the major part of this burden is the very poor' (Elias, 1995: 434). This marks the beginning of Absolutism and the *ancien regime* that would last until the Revolution. And the French Revolution, in Elias's formulation, is interpreted essentially as a tax revolt. The nobility – the extensive, extravagant household of the king and the royal court – was immune from taxation, living parasitically on the social body, from which the king extracted wealth to be distributed to secure the privileges and prestige of the nobles against the growing economic strength of bourgeois groups. The agitation for reform immediately preceding the Revolution was essentially 'demands for a different management of the tax monopoly and the tax revenue. The abolition of noble privileges means on the one hand the end of the nobility's exemption from taxes and thus a redistribution of the tax burden; and on the

other … the annihilation of a useless and functionless nobility, and thus a different distribution of tax revenue, no longer in the interests of the king but in those of society at large, or at least, to begin with, of the upper bourgeoisie' (Elias, 1995: 438).

The care-giving role of the modern European welfare state is apparent in the condensation of care-giving images (such as the Christian Mary and the classical Athena), which crystallise in the image of Marianne, the key symbol of the democratic revolution in France. The democratic revolution, according to Lefort (1988), entailed a mutation of a symbolic order. The court had represented the household of France and the king as father of his subjects, symbolic head of the extended family. The more extensive and inclusive collective household of the Republic replaced the royal household at Versailles and the pallais and chateaux of the aristocracy of the king's extended court. From the patriarchal aristocracy of the *ancien regime*, represented by the king's head, 'Madame guillotine' heralded the matriarchal Republic, symbolised by Marianne's breast. In Marianne, the symbolic representation of the virtues of the Republic, we find the residue of the classical goddess, Athena, and also the Christian tradition, Mary, mother of Christ, 'our lady of perpetual succour' who intercedes with the powerful Father on behalf of suffering children. In the French Revolution this collective representation is adapted to symbolise the ideals of the secular Republic. Marianne intimates what will eventually become the modern European welfare state, the state concerned for the welfare of all its children equally, which will provide care and nurturance 'from the cradle to the grave'. The continuity between Marianne, Mary and the classical goddess is evident in two images inextricably linked to Mary: the mother caring for the newborn Christ, God's gift to humankind, and the mother tending to the body of Christ crucified, God's gift spurned, but even as the gift is rejected, the excess of God's gift of grace 'keeps on giving'. In a similar way the state's gift of welfare, even if it is spurned and abused, may redeem society from Hobbsean nihilism.

DEEP FOUNDATIONS OF THE TREASURY IN THE IDEA OF THE COLLECTIVE HOUSEHOLD

Weber argues that the principle of household communism and the gift relation that underpins it are central to the utopian project of modern democratic societies, and to the modern conception of citizenship rights. He traces the history of revenue in a variety

of historical societies – ancient Egypt, classical Greece and Rome, dynastic China, feudal Japan – and in the patrimonial cultures of the European Middle Ages and early modern monarchies and the intricacies of their prebendal systems of tax farming.[3] 'The principle of household communism, according to which everybody contributes what he can and takes what he needs (as far as the supply of goods suffices), constitutes even today the essential feature of our family household, but is limited in the main to household consumption' (Weber, 1978a: 359). The principle of 'household communism' that Weber identifies is the primordial locus of loyalty, legitimate authority, responsibility and social solidarity. Whereas it had traditionally been limited, as Weber says, to household consumption, in the utopian prospect intimated by the democratic revolution, and pursued since, household communism came to be coextensive with the social body, culminating in the institutional configuration of the national welfare state of the mid-twentieth century, and the anticipation that collective responsibility mediated through revenue and distributed by a panoptical state apparatus extended to all members 'from the cradle to the grave'. As the promises of the revolution were broadened and deepened by ongoing processes of democratisation and progressive social antagonism, modern citizenship has come to mean the accumulated complex of individual, political and social rights and reciprocal responsibilities constituted through the matrix of the national welfare state as collective extended household.

In the philosophical discourse of modernity both preceding and following the revolution there are several complementary and consecutive arguments that, in different ways, show the centrality of the 'gift relation' to modern democracy. According to Hobbes, gratitude and trust depend on an antecedent free gift (grace). Without gracious giving humankind is in a state of nihilist war. The leviathan is a collective social redistributive science, an intentional purposive-rational instrumental construction that balances power through reciprocal rights and obligations (O'Neill, 2002). This principle of reciprocal interdependence is also at the heart of Rousseau's *Social Contract*, and a century later of Durkheim's postreligious ideal of organic solidarity through the division of labour in society, which is anchored in the anthropological universal of the gift relation, analysed by Mauss (2002). The project systematically pursued by Durkheim, Mauss and French social science was to identify the moral facts that would be the foundations of the Republic. Moral facts are imperatives. They prescribe duties that are obligatory. These

imperatives are not 'categorical', derived from pure reason (Kant, 1952) but rather, as Durkheim shows, they are sociological, derived from concrete historical and anthropological social practices. This is proven, Durkheim (1995) argues, by the fact that moral facts are never simply categorical imperatives – duties – they are also desirable, and they are aspirational. Through moral facts we transcend our individual nature and constitute society. Gods are collective representations of the moral facts that constitute society. When society worships the gods, it is worshipping itself, i.e. its own ideals: 'Divinity is society transfigured and symbolically expressed' (Durkheim, 1995: 52). Thus, in the history of taxation there is a deeper genealogy that deserves our attention, and this is the resonance of the figure of Marianne with the ancient goddess as original gift giver.

THE GIFT AND THE DUTY OF HOSPITALITY: FROM RECIPROCITY TO COMMERCE

This notion of the offering of the gift and extending hospitality separating us from barbarism and is central to both classical and contemporary conceptions of citizenship. In classical mythology Hestia (Greek)/Vesta (Roman) is the founder of both the family household and of the state. Hestia represents a fundamental distinction between the household, settlement and rule-governed collective dwelling as the condition of being civilised on the one hand, and homelessness as barbarian and a threat to civilisation on the other; an antimony that underpins society's relation to the vagabond and the gypsy, the Traveller and the person of 'no fixed abode' down through the ages. The treasury, which was the foundation and the heart of the household, was both the material store (of food, wealth) guarded by the mother – the mother lode – and the symbolic surplus, the *agalma*, the sacred treasure of the mother's original supernatural gift of fertility upon which the generation and reproduction of the whole depends.

As we have previously argued in Chapters 5 and 6, quality of life and wellbeing of society rest upon maternal principles and ideals of reciprocal gift relations, care and intergenerational solidarity. Hospitality, a cardinal virtue and a sacred duty in all of the world's religions, has its origins in the idea of the gift represented by Hestia/Vesta. Hospitality entails some portion of the surplus generated and stored by the well-organised households being given away to the less fortunate or importune outside the household.[4] As collective representation of the principle of household distribution Hestia is a

derivative manifestation of the original gift giver. She gives birth, an original, transcendental and unfathomable gift, and she gives milk, sustenance, and in return, reciprocally, she is given protection during labour, and food. Hestia/Vesta is the original guardian of the fire and treasurer of the food store, she keeps the home fire alight, she stores the grain for scarcity and future cultivation. In Rome Vesta's temple at the centre of the city represented both the collective hearth, and the hospitality afforded by the collective wealth of the city, and the idea that the care of the city could be extended or afforded to others in need, either within the city or refugees to the city. Vesta's altar and temple, originally the eternal fire and the grain store, thus the original treasury, was tended to by the Vestal Virgins, virginity representing the idea of incorruptibility, impartiality and loyalty of those who tend to the treasury for the benefit of the people.[5] Within the Christian framework, hospitality, food shared with the stranger, is the site of the miraculous transubstantiation of material exchange into transcendent and enduring 'spirit' – society. The miracle of this transubstantiation is recreated in the everyday meal; more ceremoniously in the celebratory feast of family, friends and guests; most famously in the Christian Last Supper, formally ritualised in the liturgical consecration. The bread and wine broken and redistributed by Christ become Christ's own body and blood, which, through his sharing, generates the Holy Spirit that unifies and vivifies the collective body so that we might live together in peace and harmony, constituting paradise.

Hestia/Vesta is associated with safety and security, warmth, shelter, happiness and wellbeing. She guards the eternal fire and the holy seed at her altar in the temple at the heart of the city, and she is charged with the sacred duty of hospitality. Vico (1999 [1744]) explains how the sacred duty of hospitality derives from the primordial origins of the myth – from the use of fire to clear the forests and establish the first centres of family life, in the clearing with the fire/hearth in the centre, creating safety, warmth, light in the night-time and thus the beginnings of human civilisation. Hospitality means extending the gift of the wellbeing offered by this primal household to the stranger/outsider who was otherwise at the mercy of nature or a refugee from barbarian savagery. Hospitality, graciously extending the gift of warmth, food and protection of the household, gives the gift of civilisation to the lawless unfortunate, and thus constitutes and extends civilisation where civilisation was previously lacking.

Hospitality, as symbolised by Hestia and her household gifts of fire, warmth and food, is the primordial basis of reciprocity and

thus of civilisation in various myths. Society begins with the transcendental originary gifts of life – childbirth, care, mother's milk and protection within the household (O'Neill, 2004b; 2001). Poseidon, Zeus and Apollo are balanced by the powers of Gaea, the earth mother, Athena, goddess of culture and wisdom, Aphrodite, goddess of love and affection, and Hestia, goddess of the home, care and charity. By giving the gift of hospitality to others, Hestia ensures the safety of the household, as the barbarians are now under obligation to reciprocate by contributing labour or an equivalent, and they become subject to the influence of the idea of the civilised household, which they will come to emulate, becoming part of the civilised society in formation.[6] The generative, self-reinforcing character of the gift relation is the truth contained in the proverb 'charity begins at home'. The gift to the other is in fact, simultaneously, recursively, a gift to the household. By extending civilisation to the other we show the superabundance of our society. By the other's acceptance of gracious hospitality they become civilised and thus contribute reciprocally to building society. Through hospitality the gift exchange that constitutes society is not simply reciprocal exchange; it is given in advance, fore-given in order to consolidate social bonds. The lawless barbarism of the unfortunate is forgiven, as an excess or surplus available to the civilised household, when/if reciprocated, confirms and augments the store of society. This is the god-like quality of the original hearth and household represented in the figure of Hestia; a primordial economic surplus and superabundance that becomes available for reinvestment in the interests of social solidarity. In the Christian tradition the Madonna, as 'Queen of Heaven' and 'Mother of Perpetual Succour', represents these ideals, and the Madonna and Child is the central iconic representation of the Renaissance. The motif of the Madonna and Child represents the state of balanced, harmonious wellbeing of civilisation (O'Neill, 2002) promised by the Renaissance, a promised state of wellbeing coming to fruition in the Enlightenment, democracy and collective social security based on progressive taxation.

The socially integrating logic of the gift relation is the principle upon which society, from the most primitive communal settlement to the modern collective household, the modern nation state as welfare or social security state, is founded. Excess equalised and surplus redistributed through revenue and the apparatus of the state – unemployment assistance, pensions, education, health care and housing – placates social conflict and integrates the vulnerable – the children, the elderly, the poor – into the collective household

and ensures intergenerational solidarity and social reproduction. The principle of mutual care and responsibility 'from the cradle to the grave' is anchored in the collective childhood of civilisation. The wellbeing of society depends upon the balance of these ideals, institutionalised in law, governance and morality, and cultivated as graces and civic virtues. Vico (1999: 483) explains how medals, coins and tokens were originally derived from the family shield, or coat of arms, and thus signified the security, common property and wealth of a household. The transformation of both coins and coats of arms to commerce and logos of brand name designer commodities, which try to consolidate customer loyalty, can in this context be interpreted as a distorted echo of the ethos of household loyalty and this principle of reciprocity, of our anthropologically deep-seated need to belong to a protective family, household, communicative community. Klein exposes the pseudo-reciprocity of contemporary corporate culture, which has tried to foster customer loyalty through rewards systems such as product discounts, and tries to implement company loyalty and a false sense of collective identity through company chants, insincere lexicons for describing employees as 'team players', and motivational management techniques (Klein, 2001: 16). As the preceding analysis shows, attempts to brand Ireland with particular commodities such as Ballygowan or Guinness, or as 'Ireland Inc.', radically misrepresent how loyalty figured in the origins of household communism and reinscribe it within a liberal individualist framework as 'corporate' loyalty. The principle of action in the branding of Ireland as 'Ireland Inc.' is fundamentally at odds with solidarity, the distorted echo of which is presently expressed in brand name designer commodities, the logo misrecognised for the *logos*. Within this context, our contemporary loyalty to brand names is a symptom of the persistence of our need to be protected from meaningless individuation by the simulacrum of the family shield.

THE DEVOLUTION OF CARE UNDER NEOLIBERAL GLOBALISATION

As we have already seen the iconic representation of the Enlightenment, the democratic revolutions and modernity in France is Marianne, depicted bare-breasted in the vanguard of the revolutionary tide, youthful, maidenly, graceful, the bearer of the promise of new life. Later she is depicted seated, composed, milk flowing from her breasts, representing the Republic as a nurturing mother feeding and caring for her citizens as children (Sennett, 1996). The

significance of this is that Marianne is the symbolic representation of a radical rupture and transformation of power: from the patriarchal monarchy symbolised by the king's head to the maternal Republic represented by the mother's breast. The democratic revolution is, amongst many other things, fundamentally a feminist revolution. According to Sennett, Marianne's bare breasts do not represent a youthful, eroticised liberty. Rather, her ample bosom, like the Madonna's breast, belongs to a more ancient and universal symbolic order: the promise of maternal care and nurturance that from now on will be provided by the Republic to all of the people. This promise would be realised over the course of the following two centuries by the development, institutionalisation and elaboration of what came to be the welfare state of the mid-twentieth century: the modern *res publica* as a collective home comprising education, health care, pensions, social security and housing, financed by a central treasury, organised on principles of a total gift exchange of progressive redistribution, forming a complex matrix of interdependent and reciprocal social relations of mutual solidarity on which the wellbeing of modern society rests (Mauss, 2002; Titmuss, 1971).

But the transformation of Marianne from maiden to matron masks an abiding paradox: the tension between freedom and domination. The ideal of the good life has historically been concretely represented by the house of the 'man of leisure' – the tribal chief or the feudal grandee, or the current representatives of the so-called 'leisure class' (Veblin, 1994), a social form that found its purest expression in the court society, the extended household of Louis XIV at Versailles (Elias, 1983). The ideal household of the king represented a power that was coextensive with France as a whole. The democratic revolution dissolved and decentralised this representation of an ideal home. Enlightenment and reform transformed the symbolic order of power. The sublime figure of the king at the centre of the royal court was replaced by 'the empty place of power' (Lefort, 1988: 17) at the centre of the panopticon, and the nation ceased to be the king's extended household, becoming instead the dispersed and diffused 'houses of certainty' ruled by Marianne the matron: houses of instruction, houses of industry, houses of social hygiene and moral regulation; a collective household premised on the utopian anticipations of improvement and progress (Foucault, 1991). At the level of the individual and family life, the orderly bourgeois household and the model housing schemes of the respectable working classes became the locus of the modern ideal of sovereign citizenship, an ideal offset by the tendency

towards subjectivisation, paradigmatically represented in Ireland by the alleged civilising influence of the Irish mother (Inglis, 1987).

The national welfare state as the organisational matrix of modern society made possible the institutionalisation of the gift relation of redistribution from a collective treasury and reciprocal obligation to a maternal state. Today, the Republic as matron state is ideologically disparaged as 'the nanny state'. We have re-entered a mythic universe, a postnational constellation wherein the collective home of the modern nation state is both systematically disassembled and its fiscal foundations eroded by globalisation. The globalised, neoliberal configuration is a profoundly decivilising moment whereby we are thrown 'back into a condition of barbarism, exposed to all the vicissitudes and irregularities of market forces' (Marx and Engels, 1985 [1848]: 86), as Marx described a similar moment of the industrial revolution. In this context, the contemporary fetish for the accumulation of private wealth that has fuelled and overinflated the housing boom in Ireland is not a symbol of progress, but rather, is regressive, and represents the ascendance of the negative, barbaric side of the dialectic of the Enlightenment articulated by Adorno and Horkheimer (1992).

In the Irish taxation system, the principle of reciprocity has clearly been revoked. Within the current mythology of contemporary Ireland, the relationship between the gift and taxation is reversed in popular ideology: a number of commentators and politicians have argued that it was tax cuts, rather than taxation, that created the gift of the economic prosperity of the Celtic Tiger, a gift which we all have received, and from which we all benefit (see Chapter 1). An analysis of the Irish taxation system illustrates how this ideal of reciprocity is violated. Ireland has amongst the widest income disparities in the OECD: according to recent research, only the US, Russia and Mexico have greater rates of inequality (Nolan and Smeeding, 2004). Despite this, when compared with other OECD countries, Ireland has one of the least redistributive policies of all the countries studied (Combat Poverty, 2006), and more closely resembles the neoliberal model of the US than the European model of collective responsibility. In terms of the ability of taxes and transfers to combat poverty, only the US is found to have a lower anti-poverty effect than Ireland. State programmes to reduce market income-based poverty in Ireland lowered the poverty rate by just 33 per cent compared to the average across all countries analysed of 62 per cent. This is because increases in social welfare benefits have not kept track with wage-

growth levels across Ireland, as well as the fact that state policy has systematically pursued a taxation policy that favours high earners (Combat Poverty, 2006). In recent years, there have been a series of tax reductions in Ireland that have reduced overall income tax, but this has not changed the fact that while workers on the average industrial earnings in Ireland pay tax rates at the top rate, some of the very highest earners pay no tax at all, and do so legally. In autumn 2004, average industrial earnings totalled €29,900 a year, and were taxed at 42 per cent. Yet in a study of the top 117 earners in Ireland conducted by the Department of Finance, 29 per cent pay no tax at all, and a further 1/3 pay less than 9 per cent of their incomes (through legal tax breaks) (Sweeney, 2004). In total, this group of 'taxpayers' had a tax rate of no more than 30 per cent, substantially less than the average industrial worker, who must also pay spending taxes (such as VAT of 21 per cent) at rates which are inordinately high in Ireland. That, combined with a low corporate tax rate of 12.5 per cent (nominal, effectively lower), illustrates how Ireland's taxation system is fundamentally regressive, and illustrates how current tax and welfare systems are serving to widen not narrow the gap between rich and poor (Fitzgerald, 2000: 192).

So what kind of care and hospitality does the average Irish industrial worker receive in exchange for their disproportionately high rate of tax? As noted in Chapter 1, there has been an overall rise in income inequality and relative poverty (Nolan, 2003); the exclusion of ever-growing percentages of the population from the housing market due to rising prices (Drudy and Punch, 2001); a rise in homelessness; and the persistence of profound structural inequalities in the health care system (Wren, 2003) and in the educational system. High economic growth has been accompanied by a low level of state spending on basic social programmes. While the impoverishment of public services is not an issue for wealthy taxpayers who can purchase these privately (or relocate to societies where these services are more developed), the average industrial worker is dependent upon these services. This raises fundamental questions about the kind of life we wish to cultivate in Ireland, the kind of vision we have of the future, and how we define quality of life. Sweeney asks, 'do we want to live in a society with little poverty and first class health and education systems, like many other European states? … Or do we wish to continue with creaking public services and cash in the pocket for many' (2005), although with high rates of stealth taxes, this cash is not stretching far. In this fashion, the reciprocal care-giving function of the gift central to the

evolution of the modern state is being replaced by a notion of services for direct purchase to those who can afford it, a philosophy which is perfectly consistent with the contemporary ideology of citizenship as pertaining to consumer rather than civic rights.

The impoverishment of the care-giving functions of the Irish state, and the underdevelopment of public services and the national infrastructure, can in this context be seen as a result of the failure to implement a future-oriented tax policy in the wake of the economic boom. This lack of reciprocity inherent in the version of care that underpins state policy is perhaps most clear when analysing the current health care system crisis in Ireland. Despite recent injections of funding into the health care system, a report by Wren and Tussing (2005) showed fewer rather than more acute hospital beds per 1,000 people than in 2001, an issue that is directly related to the much-documented increase in numbers of A&E patients waiting on trolleys for treatment. This A&E crisis is a result of a combination of factors: cutbacks in community and public long-stay care, decades of low capital investment in health and social services, failure to provide a primary care service and failure to address critical issues that require the coordination of hospital medical staffing, internal hospital management and integration between different parts of the health service such as the long-stay care of the elderly (Burke, S. *Village*, December 2005). The report argued against privatisation and stated that priority should be given to developing primary care and long-term care to address the A&E crisis. The A&E crisis is symptomatic of the pursuit of short-term goals at the expense of long-term planning in Ireland, and is a microcosmic example or symptom of 'crisis tendencies' inherent in the pursuit of privatisation and increased marketisation of the state (Habermas, 2001; Cerny, 2000).

Minister for Health, Mary Harney, has explicitly stated her support for both the perpetuation of a two-tiered health care system, and for outsourcing certain functions such as cleaning and home help. The system which this government currently favours is one in which health is organised on a 'for profit' basis, whereby the best solution to the current crisis is one which can be sorted out by opening it up to the commercial market, as has been done in the US. Outsourcing to private companies will inevitably mean a decline in quality due to the need to cut corners in order to undercut competitors and provide the lowest cost. In some instances, privatisation is actually more expensive rather than less; in a government proposal to subcontract home help for the elderly, the cost for the Health Service Executive

(HSE) for care services to a company called Comfort Keepers was €20 an hour, while the current cost of home help employed by the HSE is €14 an hour. What is most problematic about this subcontracting arrangement is that Comfort Keepers only pay their staff an average of €9.50 an hour, while the rest is recorded as profit (O'Reilly, 2006), an arrangement which brutally reveals how subcontracting aspects of health care will cause delivery of these services to be animated solely (or soul-lessly) by profit motive, not by quality of care, or the welfare of the staff, taxpayer or the elderly consumer. As well, privatising and subcontracting aspects of health care provision will displace responsibility for health onto a tier of low-paid workers, many of whom are likely to be migrant labourers, and will fuel the distinctly anti-cosmopolitan tendency to scapegoat visible minorities for social problems in Ireland. At a more general level, privatisation will in effect dissolve the reciprocal relationship between individual and state, and will absolve the state and the individual authorities governing the health care system from the duty of care so they no longer are responsible to the public for certain aspects of the health services. Subcontracting its key functions and individualising its consumption will only further exclude those who cannot pay from health care services. If we examine recent data on inequality by Wilkinson, Marmot, O'Neill and others, which links individual health with civic health and social equality, Harney's strategy of improving collective health through supporting a two-tiered system (of public and private care) implicitly reproduces social inequality and is a contradiction in terms. As well, the model of consumer citizenship that this philosophy adheres to is distinctly anti-cosmopolitan, belying Ireland's current self-image as progressive and modern.

Today, the utopian energies of collective responsibility through the republican-national welfare state appear to be exhausted and dissipated by the contradictions of the welfare state, the discourses and practices of neoliberalism and the Conservative Restoration (Powell, 2007). The utopian project of the republican welfare state as collective household depended on revenue redistribution. Under conditions of globalisation the national revenue base contracts and is fundamentally altered so that the tax burden is shifted from corporate bodies onto individual citizens as employees and consumers: 'corporate profits have risen by 90 per cent and wages by 6 per cent. But revenue from income tax has doubled over the past ten years, while revenue from corporate taxes has fallen by a half. It now contributes

a mere 13 per cent of total tax revenue, down from 25 per cent in 1980 and 35 per cent in 1960' (Gorz, in Beck, 2000: 5–6). In the context of globalisation the twenty-first-century capitalist is reborn as the eighteenth-century 'absentee landlord' spatio-temporally and financially disconnected from relations of social responsibility (Bauman, 2000). In the contemporary context, the collective household of the nation state is disassembled. New, individualised and privatised ideas of the household have superseded the notions of reciprocity, and as the housing boom and accompanying soaring housing prices have indicated, the private house is now the quintessential commodity fetish in Ireland, most notably in the form of the reconstituted early nineteenth-century institution of the exclusive gated enclave. These anti-social, dystopian ideal homes at the level of the atomised individual are compensated for by the utopian representation of Ireland as cosmopolitan and progressive, but in the absence of a redistributive and governmental matrix, the notion of cosmopolitanism, which implies a belonging to an international community based on reciprocal obligations and global justice, falls far short of the mark.

RECOGNITION, REDISTRIBUTION AND TAXATION

A current debate that is central to current questions of citizenship, globalisation, cosmopolitanism and social justice is that between Axel Honneth and Nancy Fraser, commonly referred to as the recognition/redistribution debate. Honneth, a German philosopher and critical theorist, is reworking a central paradigm of the struggle for recognition in Hegel's *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (1977) [1807], the dialectic of consciousness in the metaphor of the master-slave relation, to argue that the fundamental grammar of social conflict in modern society is the struggle for recognition. Nancy Fraser, an American Marxist-feminist philosopher, argues a materialist position against Honneth's neo-Hegelian idealism. Fraser argues that the problem of social justice cannot be addressed in terms of a singular dialectic of recognition that is the most fundamental grammar of social conflict, but rather that 'justice today requires *both* redistribution *and* recognition' (Fraser and Honneth, 2003: 9). 'Theoretically', Fraser says, 'the task is to devise a two dimensional conception of justice that can accommodate both defensible claims for social equality and defensible claims for the recognition of difference' (Fraser and Honneth, 2003: 9). Drawing from Fraser and Honneth (2003), we argue below that a revised

taxation system, however, could form the basis of both a redistributive justice in Ireland and a politics of recognition.

A historical sociology of the development of taxation clearly shows that the development of modern identities and subjectivities, and recognition of their rights, duties and obligations, are inextricably bound up with one another. Modern citizenship has come to mean the accumulated complex of individual, political and social rights and reciprocal responsibilities constituted through the matrix of the national welfare state as collective extended household. It is only in the context of the complex matrix of reciprocal and recursive relations between the state and the subject that the subject as citizen – as the recognised and recognising bearer of rights and responsibilities – emerges and is constituted historically, and the reconcilability of the citizen is, in turn, inextricably bound up with the development of the institutional configuration and the apparatus of taxation. More fundamentally, anthropologically, and as evidenced by the mythological record, recognition and redistribution are equally present and constitutive of the primordial social relation – the gift. The gift is a 'total social fact', 'an event which has significance that is at once social and religious, magic and economic, utilitarian and sentimental, juridical and moral' (Titmuss, 1971). As a total social fact the grammar of the gift entails simultaneously both recognition and redistribution. Neither can be said to be primary and the other secondary.

When the gift relation is worked up into a total system of reciprocal and obligatory social relations, as approximated in the republican democratic national welfare state, recognition/redistribution become the principle of all exchanges. Struggles for recognition are, *ipso facto*, demands for redistribution, and struggles for redistribution entail, necessarily, demands for recognition. It is only in the historically recent context of globalisation and the emergence of the postnational constellation that recognition and redistribution become uncoupled, as the revenue basis of the gift relations of the welfare state become eroded and transformed. The state resists claims to recognition, as they inevitably entail commitment of resources, and the state resists struggles for redistribution, as they reinforce claims to recognition, and consequently resources.

The relationship between recognition and redistribution, and their contingency on taxation, has been demonstrated with abundant clarity by the epidemiological and public health studies by the contemporary English epidemiologists Michael Marmot (2004) and

Ian Wilkinson (2005). In separate, extensive and complementary empirical studies of health statistics Marmot and Wilkinson provide the empirical quantitative data that proves conclusively the diseases and morbidity resulting from the simultaneous psychological and physiological injuries of misrecognition and maldistribution. Misrecognition and maldistribution are registered by the gradient of the social rate of disease, in a clearly discernable pattern, a cluster, or syndrome, including coronary heart disease, obesity, depression and stress-related illnesses, and of crime and interpersonal violence, of road deaths and of alcohol and drug abuse. The empirical evidence is conclusive and unambiguous: societies and social arrangements that have more equal distribution of social goods and greater parity of recognition are healthier and happier than those with sharper polarities. The common matrix of parity of recognition and social equality is progressive taxation and generous provision of universal public services, education, health care, housing and social security. It seems almost gratuitous to remind ourselves at this point that Ireland has become the second most unequal society in the OECD, has only very recently decriminalised homosexuality, is still in the throes of a national-identity defining sectarian conflict, is struggling to come to terms with an influx of non-national migrant workers and asylum seekers, has the worst public transit and public services provision, and has had for decades the lowest spending on pensions, public education, housing and health care. Ireland also has the worst morbidity in the developed world for several of the disease indices used by Marmot and Wilkinson, including coronary heart disease and depression, and has one of the fastest rates of obesity increase in the world amongst both adults and children, and alarming increases in road traffic deaths, suicide and deliberate self-harm, binge drinking, substance abuse and interpersonal violence.

TAXATION AND THE COMMON GOOD IN AN AGE OF GLOBALISATION

The common good is the extension of the benefits of civilization to all in the collective household. The responsibility for economic and social well-being is general, transnational. (J. K. Galbraith, 1998)

The inextricable unity of recognition and redistribution underpins the characteristically modern notion of justice as distributive justice, i.e. '"justice" as the system of entitlements on the basis of which can demand social recognition of their legitimate claims (e.g. for

resources, freedoms, etc.)' (Jones, 2004: 3). A cosmopolitan distributive justice appropriate for globalisation entails the recognition of rights, including rights to assistance when one suffers the consequences of market transactions. In that case individuals may invoke their rights not only against the state, but also, equally importantly, against the concentrations of private power that dominate the global economy (Jones, 2004: 4), as people can be indirectly harmed when the social fabric or the natural world on which they depend is damaged. Consequently, protecting individual rights demands some provision of care for the social and natural environments in which people live (Jones, 2004: 230).

The civilising effect of the welfare state includes the disciplining, regulating and integrating effects of the division of labour, and protecting people from the barbarism of market forces and diseconomies through gift exchange. This balancing of forces cultivates the model working class of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, disciplined, moral, reflexive and self-regulating, the special and essential product of industrial capitalism that Marx envisaged, heroised by socialism and romantically imagined by both conservatives and liberals.

Globalisation – flexibilisation and what Sennett calls 'the corrosion of character' that results from the flexibilised regime (1999) – has eliminated the conditions of possibility of such a class. Under globalisation's theft of revenue, and the contraction of the gift exchange matrix of the welfare state, society becomes decivilised. Capitalism without work means the re-emergence of a *lumpen-proletariat*, a welfare-dependent underclass or the large and growing proportion of the workforce in the low-wage, no-security amorphous service sector. The contraction of welfare gift exchanges entails the degradation of a welfare class, a residual and now expanding class of the socially excluded who fall outside of the civilising relations of gift reciprocity and hospitality. This is a form of neobarbarism. The first sacrifices to Hestia and to Apollo were human sacrifices of the wretched and the lawless unfortunates, the lawless savages and amoral squatters who trespassed and scavenged and thieved from the households, food stores and cultivated fields of the civilised. The sacred duty of hospitality was to extend civilisation to these uncivilised barbarians, and this was done through the gift, which simultaneously was an act of recognition and redistribution. But at the same time, on other occasions, these people were rounded up, whipped and stoned out of the city, away from the settlement, and ritually sacrificed to the

Gods, in much the same way as street people and other undesirables are periodically rounded up and moved along by the police today. The demoralised, decivilised postwelfare proletariat of globalisation are beyond alienation. The underclasses are so socially excluded from normal society that they struggle for recognition and respect only amongst themselves – at times violently. Some appear on the Jerry Springer show and reality TV theatres of the absurd, a return to the theatre of Greek tragedy, after the loss of ideals, seeking moral regulation from the mob. As tragi-comic as it seems, it shows the persistence of the deep human need for limits, moral boundaries, and if society no longer will provide it for the under-included, they seek it – at times violently – from one another.

CONCLUSION:
THE STATE, TAXATION AND THE POSTNATIONAL CONSTELLATION

Within the new, global economic order in which global corporations are structurally disconnected from national revenue and the local redistributive apparatus, the collective household of the national state is disassembled, and once again we find ourselves dwelling in a state of primordial chaos, 'exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition and fluctuations of the market' (Marx and Engels, 1985: 87). Despite the gulfs that separated them, in the nineteenth century capitalists shared the city with their workers. Industrial philanthropists paid for improvements to the city that were mutually beneficial, and shelled out to fund improvements and cultural institutions that they would share – thus David Dale and Robert Owen's New Lanark in Glasgow, Titus Salt's Saltaire in Bradford, Lever Brother's Port Sunlight in Liverpool, Birmingham's Bourneville, Godin's Familistaire and Motte-Bossut's municipal social security system in Lille-Roubaix, Krupp's facilities for its workers in Essen, Pullman's company town in Chicago, Guinness's extensive housing, pensions and improvement schemes in Dublin, Thomson's model village and Beamish's model artisans' dwellings in Cork. And private improvements were matched by public utilities funded by taxes and rates on local industry – waterworks, sewage, hospitals and schools. In the mid-nineteenth century one company, Beamish and Crawford, paid one-eighth of the entire rates for the city of Cork. Today, 40 per cent of the world's pharmaceuticals are exported from the port of Cork, to the value of $US20–25 billion per annum. Pharmaceuticals are amongst the most

lucrative commodities on the market. In the mid-eighteenth century 40 per cent of the world's slaves, the most lucrative commodities then, were traded through the port of Liverpool. Merchants and industrialists of previous eras amassed vast fortunes, reinvesting and spending their largesse locally, and subject to local taxation. Despite the ideology of *laissez faire*, the late nineteenth century was characterised by paternalistic municipal socialism (Mumford, 1973: 542). In the twentieth century national revenue centralised this function. The modern state, in exchange for taxation and democratically legitimated power, reciprocally redistributed goods in the form of social security, education, health care, housing and infrastructure (Offe and Ronge, 1982, 1984a; deSwaan, 1988).

In the twenty-first-century postnational constellation of globalisation, this matrix of social integration and solidarity is disassembled (Beck, 2000; Bauman, 1998; Mishra, 1999). In the present context of globalisation, economic activity is conducted in a global market, and the national revenue apparatus cannot control this activity. The revenues base for its redistributive functions is sharply contracted. Today, local, that is to say national, taxation gets a minor take from global business, and a disproportionate share from direct tax on local labour and indirect tax on local consumption. The state assumes the legitimation burden, providing security, housing, education, health and welfare that merchants and manufacturers previously had to pony up for. Post-Fordist and transnational systems of production dispersal mean that in a postnational constellation global elites are distanced from their diseconomies and disembedded from social relations of responsibility. They become immune from legitimation deficits and political accountability. Globalisation reintroduces the polarisations of the industrial revolution – the super rich global elite, the middle classes petit-proprietors and professionals in secure employment, and an insecure lumpen-proletariat – but now dispersed on a global scale, without the mediating institutions of the national welfare state. Intel and Pfizers' shareholders enjoy facilities in Monaco, the Bahamas, and gated enclosures in Southern California. Their children attend Oxbridge or private Ivy League colleges, not the local universities of Dublin and Cork. They consume their culture in Cannes and Manhattan. Meanwhile, affluent Celtic Tigers minimise their tax liabilities and splash their petty cash in Marbella and speculate on bargain-basement real estate in Eastern Europe, playing in the surf at the edges of global wealth. In a historical recurrence of the pattern

of the tax burden of the Middle Ages, the lowest order of society – commoners, journeymen and the great mass of ordinary people – pay high taxes on housing, shopping and other stealth taxes,[7] to support the housing, health care and public services of a tax-minimising propertied bourgeoisie and a tax-exempt global elite, and to paper over the cracks in a crumbling and decrepit nineteenth- and mid-twentieth-century infrastructure.

What we wish to show here is that if Ireland claims to be truly cosmopolitan we must commit to a version of citizenship rights that follows the principles of both recognition and redistribution, and does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of where they were born, or how much they are worth. The model we suggest is a model of cosmopolitan citizenship. While Millar argues that invitations to conceive of the self as a citizen of the world are a distraction from the more pressing task of developing moral virtues within existing communities (1999), we would argue that the diasporic history of Ireland and the current high rate of immigration make the distinction between national and international more fluid than he envisages. A revision of the existing taxation system in Ireland and a return to the reciprocal function of the gift of the state would certainly be a start to the cosmopolitanisation of Ireland. If, however, as Habermas claims, the current 'postnational constellation' means that global mobility and economic non-accountability mean that nation states can no longer offset the negative social effects of globalisation, this may not be enough; for in Habermas's view, what we really need is a 'global domestic policy' (2001) which can curtail the radical exploitation of transnational corporations (TNCs) as well as tax loopholes through offshoring. Similarly, Held (2004) argues that we need a multilevel global covenant that could impose mandatory labour and environmental standards, globally established and mandatory codes of conduct for TNCs, and a new international tax mechanism that takes account of global mobility. Other diverse political debates imply that the terrain of the political should not be formalised or in a global covenant, which could itself become subsumed into the neoliberal globalisationist hegemony, and that a true project of cosmopolitan and radical democracy must adhere to more micropolitical, anti-universalist political strategies. However, even if it is not enough, a redistributive tax reform in Ireland seems like a good place to start.

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8
Education and Recognition: The Cultivation of a Cosmopolitan Imaginary

Orienting Questions

- How can economic globalisation be reconciled with national citizenship?
- What is radical social democracy?
- What is cosmopolitan citizenship?
- What is the relationship between cosmopolitan consciousness and democratic citizenship?
- What principles would inform a programme of education to cultivate a cosmopolitan citizenship?

In this chapter we will demonstrate the link between wellbeing and recognition, both in terms of the need to confer recognition onto the 'new Irish' of migrant labourers and refugees, and the need to cultivate modes of recognition as well for all individuals in Ireland whose wellbeing and self-identity have been challenged by the fragmenting effects of globalisation; by workplace contexts which militate against solidarity, satisfaction and a sense of continuity; and by a regressive taxation system which deprives large numbers of people of adequate health care, housing, transport and access to quality of life. As the previous chapters have shown, state policy in Ireland, and specifically policy around work permits, taxation and health care, is currently based on a neoliberal model designed to maximise profit for private corporations, but which also increases levels of social inequality and endangers social cohesion. How can we counteract the 'Conservative Restoration' and develop a cosmopolitanism political imaginary that could help overcome the tendency in Ireland to promote policies and institutions which foster economic growth at the expense of social cohesion, which intensify social exclusion along class, race and ethnic lines, and which demonstrate a profound lack of concern for growing levels of inequality in Ireland?

In *The Postnational Constellation* (2001) Habermas poses the moral-political problem of globalisation as that of cultivating 'cosmopolitan

solidarity'. The specific context in which the problem is formulated is anomie arising from the individualising effects of a 'whirlpool of an accelerating process of modernisation' (Habermas, 2001: 112) and the eclipsing of the nation state as the basis of social solidarity. What is needed, Habermas suggests, is 'the construction of a multi-cultural civil society' built on 'a "politics of recognition," because the identity of each individual citizen is woven together with collective identities, and must be stabilized in a network of mutual recognition' (Habermas, 2001: 74). This entails a 'de-coupling of political culture from majority culture' so that 'the solidarity of citizens is shifted onto the more abstract foundation of a "constitutional patriotism"' (Habermas, 2001: 74). Constitutional patriotism may, Habermas argues, provide the basis of moral authority and a sense of duty that transcends ethnic difference: a compulsory cosmopolitan solidarity. The nation state can no longer provide the basis of social integration and moral authority, because, as Beck expresses it: 'the metaphysical essentialism of the "nation" … inevitably give[s] rise to those consequences which made the 20th century one of modernised barbarism. Thus, someone who affirms and elevates "his own" will almost inevitably, rejects and despises the foreign [sic]' (Beck, 2002: 38). But the converse of Benjamin's thesis that 'there is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism' (1992b: 248) is also true. The metaphysical essentialism of the nation, if it is the cause of barbarism, is equally the cause of civilisation. As Durkheim has shown throughout his analyses of solidarity, morality and education, it is precisely the metaphysical essentialism of the nation, now disparaged as the source of extremism, chauvinism and ethnocentrism, that is the very basis of the moral authority of the collective society, that transcends particular interests, that inspires self-sacrifice and commands duty.

The task of cultivating a constitutional patriotism and a compulsory cosmopolitan solidarity delineated by Habermas and Beck – a task confronting contemporary Ireland as much as Germany – echoes the problem Durkheim faced at the turn of the twentieth century, when, as Professor of Education and Adviser to the Education Ministry, he was assigned the task of formulating an educational programme of secular morality to promote social integration in the French Third Republic. But rather than formulating religious traditions as sources of barbarism, as Beck does of nationalism (Durkheim could easily have identified religion with inquisitions, sectarianism and pogroms) Durkheim sees religious inheritance as the repository of morality, a

rich cultural legacy, the resource within which a new secular rational morality may be found:

> We must seek, in the very heart of religious conceptions the moral realities that are, as it were, lost and dissimulated in them. We must disengage them, find out what they consist of, determine their proper nature, and express them in a rational language. In a word, we must discover the rational substitutes for those religious notions that for a long time have served as the vehicle for the most essential moral ideas. (Durkheim, 1973: 9)

Is the same not true of modern nationalism? The national society and its institutions were, for Durkheim, rational substitutions for religious morality. In the postnational constellation we must look for substitutes for the moral reality of national identification. The question Durkheim addresses in *Moral Education* – how to preserve and provide rational substitutions for moral ideals that have heretofore only appeared in religious guise now applies to morality in the postnational constellation. It is not enough to throw the baby of modern secular morality – especially *duty*, the compulsory element of solidarity, which has up to now been institutionalised in *national* patriotism – out with the bathwater of the solidarities of national society. If nationalism is, as Habermas and Beck say, an outdated 'barbarism', then we must look for the forms of civilisation that it has up to now enclosed.

Before we can begin this exploration of moral education for a postnational constellation, we should consider the metaphysical fiction of the cosmopolitan, which Beck hopes will supplant that of the nation.

In one of the very few places where Beck fleshes out his notion of a cosmopolitan subject, he gives us the example of an elderly woman who is 'place polygamous' (Beck, 2000: 72–3). Though she is German, she spends half her time in Kenya, and is equally at home in both places; she loves them both. What is revealing in Beck's vignette of cosmopolitanism is the particularity with which we know the European subject – she is from 'Tutzing, on lake Starnberg, near Munich', whereas the Other place, with which she is purportedly polygamous, is simply 'Kenya' (a country larger than Germany, with several languages and cultures) or, even more generally, 'Africa'. Rather than an egalitarian 'place polygamy', it seems we have here an 'African affair'; an affair made possible by European resources – an adequate pension and health care system; an affair cushioned by a white and Afro-Asian postcolonial and global tourism cultural enclave.

Rather than representing a new, proto-cosmopolitan morality that transcends racial, ethnic and neocolonial global rifts, what we have is an all too historically familiar Bavarian ambivalent fascination with *Afrika*, which, now romantic, can, at a turn, become something quite opposite. Setting aside for a moment (if one can) the deeply engrained problem of German Provencal romantic primitivism, now misrecognising itself as cosmopolitanism, and the astounding lack of critical self-reflexivity revealed in the example, it is further taken for granted in Beck's illustration that cosmopolitanism is a phenomenon of the adult world – indeed a quality associated with wisdom accruing to the conditions of age and retirement: cosmopolitanism is a state of mind and a quality of subjective culture gained through the cumulative effects of a lifetime of experiences of encounters and interactions with the Other – through work, international travel, exposure to world cultures, appreciation of alternative lifestyles, the experience of multicultural neighbourhoods in world cities, all of this premised on relative affluence, education, social and geographical mobility.

DURKHEIM:
COSMOPOLITAN REASON, DIGNITY AND MORAL EDUCATION

The parental discursive masterframe of the contemporary metaphysical fiction of the cosmopolitan is the Enlightenment, and specifically the moral idealism of Immanuel Kant. Durkheim argues that the Kantian categorical imperative of morality is not grounded in the abstract quality of universal reason, but is a historically contingent social institution, representing collective historical experience of human beings grappling to manage and civilise the antinomies of inner and outer nature. What we understand as universal morality is in fact the achievement of a particular civilising process (namely, the Enlightenment tradition of grounding morality in reason and institutionalising this in formal law). This points us away from Kantian universalism as the basis of cosmopolitan morality and solidarity as it arbitrarily imposes the moral principles and legal practices, the collective representations worked out within particular tradition(s) as universal. It points us instead in a very different and much more challenging direction: constructing a new political tradition – of cosmopolitanism – not from a singular source of reason and moral authority, but from a great diversity of traditions and points on the social fabric.

Turner (2000) draws attention to the bases of cosmopolitanism in other (non-western, non-modern) contexts and civilisations.

Similarly, in a study of the dignity of working men Lamont has shown the diversity of sources of cosmopolitanism that working-class men use as a repertoire to draw from. The collective representations of various cultures and discourses – often drawn from discourses that in other aspects and respects are deeply problematic and objectionable – can provide the resources from which people draw, to bridge boundaries with people who are different from them (Lamont, 2002). They show non-college educated blue-collar black and white workers in the US, and north African and white workers in France, draw not only from the discourses of liberalism, communism and republicanism, but from the traditions of Christianity and Islam, pop-science ideas of socio-biology, the experience of military service, and even the practices of consumerism.

According to Durkheim, 'all development of individualism has the effect of opening moral consciousness to new ideas and rendering it more demanding. Since every advance that it makes results in a higher conception, a more delicate sense of the dignity of man, individualism cannot be developed without making apparent to us as contrary to human dignity, as unjust, social relations that at one time did not seem unjust at all' (1973: 12). Similarly, nationalist loyalties that were once the hallmarks of good citizenship now appear as chauvinistic. Patriotic duties and self-sacrifice for the nation appear as archaic and barbaric. This is the lesson that has been so hard to learn from the experiences of extreme forms of nationalism – fascism, Zionism, or in Ireland Irish republicanism and loyalism – that the Holocaust, ethnic cleansings, Israeli settlements, acts of paramilitary terrorism were (and are) conducted not by madmen, or by fanatics, or even by dupes, but by good citizens, willingly doing what they sincerely believe and ardently feel to be their duty.

Thus, Durkheim argues: 'When we undertake to secularise moral education, it is not enough to cut out, we must replace' (1973: 11).

We must retain the transcendental quality of morality that gives it dignity and authority. Not only must this be preserved, it must be enriched with new elements. For a great nation like ours to be truly in a state of moral health it is not enough for most of its members to be sufficiently removed from the grossest transgressions – murder, theft, fraud of all kinds. A society in which there is pacific commerce between its members, in which there is no conflict of any sort, but which has nothing more than that would have a rather mediocre quality. Society must, in addition, have before it an ideal toward which it reaches. It must

have some good to achieve, an original contribution to the moral patrimony of mankind. (1973: 13)

Similarly, today, when we undertake to excise nationalism from the national curricula, we must replace it with new ideals. The transcendental quality of morality that gives it dignity and authority must be retained, because as Habermas argues, what is necessary in Germany and the EU and in other postnational societies is 'consciousness of compulsory cosmopolitan solidarity' (2001: 112).

Let us return again to the task Durkheim was faced with, of formulating a secular liberal programme of moral education that would promote social solidarity and ensure integration in the Third Republic and counteract the persistence of seductions of sectarianism, monarchism and communism. Durkheim advocated a pedagogy and curriculum that would cultivate moral character appropriate to the circumstances. Mythical and religious systems are, Durkheim says, the bearers of the world's patrimony of moral realities, though they are 'lost and dissimulated' in them.

We must seek those moral realities that are as it were lost and dissimulated in it. We must disengage them, find out what they consist of, determine their proper nature, and express them in rational language. In a word, we must discover the rational substitutes for those religious notions that for a long time have served as the vehicle for the most essential moral ideas. (Durkheim, 1973: 9)

Durkheim's analysis identifies three principles of morality dissimulated in myth and religion, namely: the spirit of discipline, attachment to social groups, and autonomy or self-determination. To cultivate these principles of morality Durkheim advocated a curriculum emphasising the teaching of science, art and history. Science, he argued, would 'provide a sense of the real complexity of things'. Echoing Baudelaire, who said painting is essentially a system of moral values made visible (1972: 51), Durkheim argues that the study of art 'could eliminate self-centeredness, opening the mind to disinterestedness and self-sacrifice'. History could 'give a sense of continuity with the past and of the principle traits of the national character' (Durkheim, cited in Lukes, 1973: 117). The child, Durkheim argued, needed to be 'taught about the nature of the social contexts in which he will be called upon to live: family, corporation, nation, the community of civilization that reaches towards including the whole of humanity; how they were formed and transformed, what effect they have on the individual and what role he plays in them' (Durkheim, cited in

Lukes, 1973: 117). Teaching the 'principle traits of national character' sounds quite at odds with cultivating cosmopolitanism, of course, and Durkheim wouldn't deny that. Moral education is historically contingent and culturally relative he argues, and he is trying to specify what is appropriate for his time and place. Today, we have to formulate the principles of a post-Catholic, postnationalist moral education appropriate for contemporary Irish society.

In *The Postnational Constellation* Habermas shows how things have become much more complicated since the eclipse of the nation state by globalisation. Over the past century and a half – and exactly what Durkheim's programme of moral education for the Third Republic sought to achieve – 'the national basis for civic solidarity has become second nature, and this national foundation is shaken by the policies and regulations that are required for the construction of a multicultural civil society' (Habermas, 2001: 74). In the postnational constellation not only can this national basis for civic solidarity no longer be relied upon, but also it actually becomes part of the problem:

For nation states with their own national histories, a politics that seeks the co-existence of different ethnic communities, language groups, religious faiths, etc., under equal rights naturally entails a process as precarious as it is painful. The majority culture, supposing itself to be identical with the national culture as such, has to free itself from its historical identification with a general political culture, if all citizens are to be able to identify on equal terms with the political culture of their own country. To the degree that this de-coupling of political culture from majority culture succeeds, the solidarity of citizens is shifted onto the more abstract foundation of 'constitutional patriotism.' If it fails, then the collective collapses into subcultures that seal themselves off from one another. But in either case it has the effect of undermining the substantial commonalties of the nation understood as a community of shared descent. (Habermas, 2001: 74)

Habermas has conceded to postmodern theory that reason is de-transcendentalised and situated. But, Habermas argues, 'from the correct premise that there is no such thing as a context-transcendent reason, postmodernism draws the false conclusion that the criteria of reason themselves change with every new context' (Habermas, 2001: 148). Therefore, Habermas says, despite the assertion of an '"incommensurability" of different paradigms and the "rationalities" peculiar to them' (Habermas, 2001: 149) universal pragmatics and the ideal speech act continue to be amongst the best resources at our disposal for the critique of ideology and for the evaluation of

discourse leading to morally binding consensus. The more abstract foundation of morality/social solidarity in the postnational constellation becomes concretised, or embodied in human rights. 'Human rights, i.e. legal norms with an exclusively moral content, make up the entire normative framework for a cosmopolitan community' (Habermas, 2001: 108). Whereas in the modern nation state solidarity has been based on the particularity of collective identities – shared histories and traditions (to a greater or lesser degree) – in the postnational constellation 'cosmopolitan solidarity has to support itself on the moral universalism of human rights alone' (Habermas, 2001: 108).

Underpinning both Durkheim and Habermas, as we have seen, is the Kantian masterframe of Enlightenment reason. There must be a rational basis for modern morality, whether that be in the material realm of the division of labour and the integrating structural functions of the modern state, or the symbolic realm of collective representations and universal pragmatics. Even when, and perhaps especially now as Habermas agrees, reason is de-transcendentalised and situated, it needs to be supplemented with other capacities and resources. Kant provides an indication of where such resources may be found, in a dimension of Kant that is somewhat undeveloped in both Durkheim and Habermas. This is what Kant identifies in the third critique, the Critique of Judgement, as 'the pedagogical role of the aesthetic'. Aesthetic ideas, as Kant calls them, by which, as he elaborates, he means metaphors, allegories and similes, poetic, mythic and religious language, play a crucial role in transcending the limits to pure reason and practical reason. Aesthetic ideas, Kant says, have the cognitive effect of helping 'to bring reason into harmony with itself' (Kant cited in Coleman, 1974: 160).

By an aesthetic idea I mean that representation of the imagination which induces much thought, yet without the possibility of any definite thought whatever, i.e. concept, being adequate to it, and which language, consequently, can never get quite on level terms with or render completely intelligible … Such representations of the imagination may be termed ideas. This is partly because they at least strain after something lying out beyond the confines of experience … no concept can be wholly adequate to them. (Kant cited in Coleman, 1974: 161)

For Kant, aesthetic ideas, metaphor and myth have an important cognitive value, as they give cognition greater depth and transcendence. What applications might this have for moral pedagogy and cosmopolitanism?

COSMOPOLITAN EDUCATION FOR ADULTS:
JOYCE'S AESTHETIC IMAGE OF THE COSMOPOLITAN SUBJECT

James Joyce characterises himself as a 'socialistic artist' engaged in an emancipatory politics – the democratisation of the world and the elevation of the common person as modern hero. As a cosmopolitan subject he models himself after Daedalus, the architect of the labyrinth, a civilising machine that tamed the Minotaur, who subsequently invented wings with which he could fly to freedom. Daedalus flew low, close to the earth, and got home safely. His son Icarus flew too near the sun, his wings melted and he fell to his death. Joyce's ideal cosmopolitan subject – Joyce himself, and his fictional hero – stays close to the earth. Joyce saw his work (amongst other things) as pedagogical. In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* he explicitly sets the task of the artist as representing and bringing into view an ideal subject 'the uncreated conscience of my race' (1994 [1916]: 432). That ideal would serve as an aspirational horizon, a model to emulate, an aesthetic image against which his contemporaries could critically evaluate themselves, and self-reflexively try to reform themselves in such a way as they might come to approximate the ideal. Joyce's ideal is represented paradigmatically by the heroic figure of the modern Ulysses, Leopold Bloom.

As the figure of Joyce's Bloom as a pedagogic aesthetic image of cosmopolitanism is so important to Joyce, and to our discussion here, let us quote Joyce's biographer, Richard Ellmann, at some length as he reconstructs a crucial conversation between the artist and some of his friends:

Joyce was at pains to point out … the many-sided nature of his hero. 'Do you know of any complete all-round character presented by any writer?' To Budgen's nomination of Christ, Joyce objected, 'He was a bachelor, and never lived with a woman. Surely living with a woman is one of the most difficult things a man has to do, and he never did it.' 'What about Faust,' Budgen asked, 'or Hamlet?'

'Faust!' said Joyce. 'Far from being a complete man, he isn't a man at all. Is he an old man or a young man? Where are his home and family? We don't know. And he can't be complete because he's never alone. Mephistopheles is always hanging around at his side or heels. We see a lot of him, that's all.'

'Your complete man in literature is, I suppose, Ulysses?'

'Yes', said Joyce. 'No-age Faust isn't a man. But you mentioned Hamlet. Hamlet is a human being, but he is a son only. Ulysses is son to Laertes, but he is father to Telemachus, husband to Penelope, lover of Calypso, companion in

arms of the Greek warriors around Troy, and King of Ithaca. He was subjected to many trials, but with wisdom and courage he overcame them all. Don't forget that he was a war dodger who tried to evade military service by simulating madness. He might never have taken up arms and gone to Troy, but the Greek recruiting sergeant was too clever for him and while he was ploughing the sands, placed young Telemachus in front of his plough. But once at war the conscientious objector became jusqua'au-boutist. When the others wanted to abandon the siege he insisted on staying till Troy should fall.' Then he went on, 'Another thing, the history of Ulysses did not come to an end when the Trojan war was over. It began just when the other Greek heroes went back to live the rest of their lives in peace.' And then – Joyce laughed – 'he was the first gentleman in Europe. When he advanced, naked, to meet the young princess he hid from her maidenly eyes the parts that mattered of his brine-soaked, barnacle-encrusted body. He was an inventor too. The tank is his creation. Wooden horse or iron box – it doesn't matter. They are both shells containing armed warriors.'

'What do you mean,' said Budgen, 'by a complete man? For example, if a sculptor makes a figure of a man then that man is all round, three dimensional, but not necessarily complete in the sense of being ideal. All human bodies are imperfect, limited in some way, human beings too. Now your Ulysses …'

'He is both,' said Joyce. 'I see him from all sides, and therefore he is all-round in the sense of your sculptor's figure. But he is a complete man as well – a good man.'

In subsequent conversations he emphasized to Suter and Budgen that Ulysses was not a god, for he had all the defects of the ordinary man, but was kindly. For Suter's benefit he would distinguish in German: 'Ulysses was not "gut" but "gutmutig" [decent]. Bloom is the same. If he does something mean or ignoble, he knows it and says "I have been a perfect pig."' (Ellmann, 1983: 435–6)

In Joyce's work the Ideal, the truth of cosmopolitan virtue, is inextricably intertwined with the material – the phenomenological and mundane details of a day in the life of ordinary people. Commentary and critique of such a work would make an important contribution to cosmopolitan education. For Joyce the important thing about Bloom is not that he is 'good' but that he is 'decent', that is, not that he corresponds to a transcendental ideal standard, of reason, of perfect communication, but that he struggles to negotiate between his ascription to those ideals and the demands of practical life in historically situated particular milieus of everyday life.[1] Bloom, the exemplary cosmopolitan subject, is very much an ordinary man immersed in everyday life.

Durkheim's programme for moral education sought to cultivate three principles: the spirit of discipline, attachment to social groups, and autonomy or self-determination. Teaching science, Durkheim argued, served the wider pedagogical cognitive aim of cultivating a quality of mind that could grasp, appreciate and engage with complexity. Art could cultivate an ability to transcend the limits of subjective perspectivalism and egocentrism by developing capacities for *verstehen*, a hermeneutic and emphatic ability to enter into and understand, see and interpret the world from others' points of view. And teaching history, Durkheim argued, counterbalances the tendencies towards loss of historicity and collective amnesia as consequences of division of labour and individualism by revealing continuity with the past, inheritance, legacy and tradition, the necessary bases of commonality and attachment within a wider organic solidarity.

In Durkheim's terms Joyce teaches complexity by the rigorous cognitive demands he places on his readers for their attention both to the formal architectonic structure and to the complex and intricate detail of aesthetic images that characterise his work. To read *Ulysses* or *Finnegans Wake* entails careful attention to space, time and number, to mythic and to biological analogies, to philology, etymology and problems of translation, for example. And, in the same way as a syllabus for maths or chemistry is taught, the texts can be engaged with at several levels, from elementary principles for the reader as beginner to complex formulae and theorems for the advanced student. In terms of fulfilling Durkheim's criterion of art cultivating the ability to relativise one's own perspective and adopt the perspective of others, Joyce's work speaks to this need by providing fully elaborated characters, lives, situations and contexts for readers to engage with. Joyce's exceedingly rich and complex characterisations make demands not only of cognitive intensification, but of emotional amplification and elaboration. His social types are never stereotypes, his characters never caricatures. Even in the cases of minor and despicable people we encounter in Joyce – the feckless rake, the pauper harlot, the philistine functionary, the bigoted nationalist, the nonentity – their humanity is unconcealed for us by some detail that gives us a glimpse of their wholeness. And in so far as we are drawn into the complexity and emotional intensity of characters' histories and personalities, their interior monologues as they struggle with the moral and practical dilemmas in negotiating the interfaces of biography and history, our moral

consciousness is developed. All development of individualism has the effect of opening moral consciousness to new ideas and making it more demanding, Durkheim says. The pedagogical potential of Joyce's aesthetic images is that they intensify, deepen and broaden the cognitive, connotative and normative horizons of modern consciousness. Finally, we are faced with the problem of the nation. The value of reading Joyce in the postnational constellation resides in Joyce's/Bloom's postnational cosmopolitanism being still anchored in the particularity of the nation. Joyce's work is unmistakably Irish, while belonging to the wider tradition of European modernism and global modernity. Joyce/Bloom resonates between the local and the global, national and international, particular and universal.

Joyce, who lived in exile in Trieste, Paris and Zurich, who moved house and home with astonishing frequency – about 40 times – who was fluent in several languages and conversant in several others, was once asked if he would ever return to Dublin, and replied, 'Have I ever left it?' 'I always write about Dublin', he said, 'because if I can get to the heart of Dublin I can get to the heart of every other city. In the particular is contained the universal' (Joyce cited in Ellmann, 1983: 505). Like Joyce, Bloom's cosmopolitanism is protean and ambivalent: the son of a Hungarian immigrant to Dublin, he is Irish, though unlike most Irish is Jewish and a city dweller. He is Jewish, though non-practicing. His father died by suicide, and his ancestral homeland, a ramshackle empire, is crumbling. His son, Rudi, died in childhood. There is no patrilineal descent from fatherland or father. His wife, daughter of an English soldier in Gibraltar, is having an affair. But while Bloom's life is lived on fluid and shifting sands he is not 'rootless'. His daughter, Milly, has moved to a midlands town and Bloom envisages her life unfolding and flowering there. He has a diverse network of friends and acquaintances that he cultivates solicitously. He has a job, a rather precarious one, and he works hard to earn a living. He has duties and responsibilities to others around him, such as the widow of his acquaintance Dignam, whom he assists with her insurance policy, and such as his young alter ego, Stephen, whom he extricates from a drunken fracas in the red light district and brings to the sanctuary of his home. And Bloom has a home: a kitchen that he leaves in the morning after making breakfast for himself, his wife and their cat, and a bedroom where he comes back to at night to sleep beside his wife. All Ulysses longed for throughout the Odyssey, Homer says, 'was to see the smoke from his own chimney', and Bloom's aspirations are similarly homely.

Joyce/Bloom is a secular, rational modern cosmopolitan. He has Apollo's 'god's eye', and he speaks with the voice of reason, though not without difficulty, as he grapples with his own appetites and erotic predilections, his jealousies, fears and anxieties and the trials and tribulations of an ordinary life. But Joyce/Bloom has also cultivated eyes and ears as Wittgenstein recommends, an eye for parallax and an ear attuned to polyvocality. In the famous encounter with the chauvinist anti-Semitic Citizen, Bloom engages his prejudice directly in rational argument and bests his adversary, who reverts to inarticulate violence. But Bloom also knows the arts of Hermes – when and how to dissimulate, to flatter and be equivocal, to be quiet and slip away. Bloom's polymorphous identity gives him a Trickster's capacity to shapeshift, to camouflage himself and to blend in; a capacity to put himself in the shoes of others who are very different and frequently hostile to himself, to see how the world opens itself up to their eyes and ears. These qualities are what enable him to navigate his way safely through the city while he is menaced by giants and seduced by sirens' songs – qualities of postnational cosmopolitanism needed in a mythic age of globalisation.

Cosmopolitanism is not the quality of a rationality that transcends all particularities, but on the contrary sees such a rationality as a philosophical conceit. A characteristic source of the humour in Joyce's work is to parody the authoritative voices of law, science, history and philosophy, imperialism and nationalism, playing up their conceits and aspect blindness to epic absurdity. Joyce's image of cosmopolitanism begins where the claims to totality of such discourses reach the outer limits of their extension, and grate against one another or fail to achieve the totality they had promised. The cosmos of modernity, represented in microcosm by a day in the life of his Dublin protagonists, is characterised by competing and colliding giants and gods – empire, nation, science, law, church, commerce – though, like the cosmos of Greek myth, no single power prevails in the competition for hegemony. Of all the gods and giant powers that beset modern people, no one power rules, and neither is there one Archimedean, cosmopolitan point of view that transcends and sees beyond this turmoil. Joyce/Bloom's cosmopolitanism is more down to earth, a form of life that lives in the slippages between the powers that be. Bloom is the personification of the cosmopolitan as *phronomous*, the understanding person, as the uncreated conscience forged by Joyce; Bloom is an ideal-type hermeneutic actor, who tries to see the world from many, changing points of view. He is Protean

himself: a stranger, a flâneur, an insider and an outsider to discourses of empire, nation, church and commerce; an ad-man, a civic-minded private man, a womanly man, a man who even tries to see things from a blind man's point of view. The multitude of voices and views represented in *Ulysses* are always partial and imperfect. Joyce himself is partially sighted. Aren't we all similarly handicapped? Such are the limits that the human condition places on knowledge/power, tempering it towards irony and wisdom. This is cosmopolitanism as Joyce teaches us.

However, in contemporary Ireland, the emergence of a new spatial organisation that individuates and isolates means these opportunities for cosmopolitan encounters are foreclosed. For instance, a study of housing in Cork (O'Connell and Keohane, 2005) confirms that there is a proliferation of privately developed apartment complexes, often underpinned by generous urban renewal incentives, and which are substantially outpacing social housing provision. The study identifies how new apartment developments tend to be oriented either towards young urban professionals or a 'dominant, massified form of standard apartments owned and rented by private investors' (O'Connell and Keohane, 2005: 401), to either a transient, mobile population of students and young workers, or to welfare clients, single parents, immigrants, the unemployed and the working poor. What this means, however, it that landlords are now assuming the social housing function, but for profit:

Housing priorities and the social objectives that they represent are now inverted. Whereas previously the tenant occupied a subsidised home, now the private investor/landlord enjoys the social subsidy – the urban renewal incentives initially, and tax write offs and rent allowance paid by the state thereafter. From the ideal of home as shelter for the homeless, home has become an anti-social tax shelter for the private investor. The post war welfare state represented social democratic ideals, wherein responsibility for citizens' well being embraced life 'from the cradle to the grave' through collective systems of wealth redistribution by the tax system. (O'Connell and Keohane, 2005)

The suburbanisation of Ireland has also meant that many individuals have withdrawn into exclusive enclaves, devaluing public spaces and reproducing class and racial segregation. Contemporary trends in housing in Ireland segregate populations deemed 'undesirable', those in 'social and affordable housing' – the working classes, immigrants, the poor – from private homeowners in exclusive estates, a segregation emblematically represented by the gated community, an architecture

designed to homogenise communities and reduce the possibilities for encounters with difference.

Joyce's character Leopold Bloom teaches us that the creation of a multicultural civil society depends upon establishing forms of solidarities forged in everyday encounters with difference. Cultivating cosmopolitan citizenship is integrally related to the public space of the city; to spaces where individuals shop, gossip, worship, talk, work, play – neighbourhoods where people live their daily lives; spaces that provide opportunities for reciprocal encounters and meetings with difference to occur. Cosmopolitanism needs to be encouraged at an everyday level. The *sine qua non* of the public sphere is the printed word – more broadly media and communications – and taxation design for cosmopolitan society would encourage multicultural communications. The public realm requires the regulatory and service-providing functions from the state that will maintain communicative spaces. At the moment, the public realm in Ireland is impoverished, dominated by predominantly commercial interests. Tax incentivised local forums, festivals and celebrations of different cultures could provide informal as well as formal opportunities for encounters with difference and enable interaction amongst the diverse, changing and increasingly multicultural population. Of course, such cultural moments do not themselves ensure cosmopolitan forms of recognition. They must be accompanied by broader, more formal political programmes oriented towards redistribution. Even more important than one-off events like festivals, or publications and mass communications, are mixed-use and mixed residential urban neighbourhoods, rent controlled or otherwise regulated to ensure that they are not either exclusive, desirable residential areas on the one hand or immigrant ghettoes on the other, as so many Irish urban neighbourhoods ruled by the free market have already become.

LEARNING TO LIVE WITH THE LACK: SOME TIPS FOR COSMOPOLITAN EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN

In his collection of essays, *The Making of Political Identities*, Ernesto Laclau (1994), plays with the idea of 'Minding the Gap', the familiar announcement played continuously throughout the London Underground. The gap is dangerous, and we have to mind it, but though dangerous, the gap is essential and indispensable. Without the gap, without 'play', the free space between surfaces, there could be no movement. If the gap were to be closed, the wonderful system

of the London Underground, a subterranean mobile sculptural representation of the modern metropolis, would grind to a halt. Thus, to 'mind the gap' is to be mindful of the gap: wary of the danger and the necessity of play; and careful of the gap – that we take care lest the gap be sutured too tightly. What pedagogy is appropriate to cultivate a quality of mind that is mindful of 'Minding the Gap' in this new mythic age of globalisation?

'Society doesn't exist', says Žižek (1989: 125). What Žižek means is that society is a discursive formation constructed over a fundamental Lack, and all efforts to suture or totalise the social, whether through discourses of original native communities or modern rational nation states, are doomed to failure. Laclau concurs: any structural system is always surrounded by an 'excess of meaning' which it is unable to master; consequently society as a unitary and intelligible object that grounds its own partial processes is an impossibility (1994: 90). Lack, uncertainty, ambivalence become the defining principles of modern politics. Post Lacanian/Foucaudian political theory shows how 'power becomes an empty place' (Lefort, 1988: 17) and thereafter the logic of modern politics becomes radically groundless and un-teleological, defined instead by contingency and hegemony (Laclau, 1991). The empty place of power – the ontological non-existence and impossibility of society as a pre-existing 'reality' outside of the hegemonic articulatory practices that compete to define it; the 'constitutive antagonism of the social' (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985) – is the historical recurrence of the primordial problem of human being in the world in the modern epoch. If the Lack is primary, then the problem is intractable, and recurs historically during periods of change and transition, and the history of modernity and modernisation as a whole is a history of perpetual transformation and permanent liminality. The experience of modernity is represented in Benjamin's famous image of 'the Angel of History propelled backwards into the future by the storm that we call Progress' (1992b: 249). Habermas provides us with the principles of reason, the conditions of undistorted communications that can be applied to ideological distortions and dissimulations, but this cosmopolitan reason works best in retrospect. This is why, Hegel says, Minerva's owl takes flight at dusk – when it may already be too late! In the accelerated temporalities of globalisation we need our children to be quick witted; to able to think on their feet. Kantian cosmopolitan reason needs to be supplemented and fortified by some other capacities; capacities, Benjamin suggests, for creativity, humour and cunning (1992b).

WITTGENSTEIN: GIVING THE RIGHT TIP

Wittgenstein tried the Austrian version of a Kantian moral education when he withdrew from Cambridge to become a primary school teacher in the small village of Traftenbach. Wittgenstein introduced a curriculum of maths, extending to algebra and calculus, German classics, the Bible, mythology and folklore. He taught anatomy by having his pupils assemble a cat's skeleton; engineering by having them designing buildings and steam engines on the blackboard; philology and etymology by having them write a dictionary. Wittgenstein attempted to replicate Socrates's famous pedagogical exercise where by judicious questioning he had the unschooled slave work out for himself mathematical equations, thus demonstrating the universal human quality of reason. But Wittgenstein had only mixed success, remembered by some as inspirational and enthusiastic, though eccentric, but by others as tyrannical. He was in fact charged and tried for child cruelty, but he perjured himself in court, a moral failure of his own principles, a character flaw that plagued him thereafter. Like many rational cosmopolitans, Wittgenstein professed the ideal of love of the common man, but in real life he was a misanthrope and a recluse. His failure to succeed in teaching his village children advanced algebra, and his physical cruelty towards them as a result, mark his own frustration of running up against the limit of the Enlightenment conceit of reason, and his subsequent *volte face* to the situatedness of reason in language games and particular forms of life. What we need, and what education needs to cultivate, Wittgenstein concluded, is not simply – or at least not alone – the perspective of pure reason, the Apollonian, singular, unambiguous language of ideal speech; we need to cultivate the capacity to see the world from different aspects and the ability to attune to a diversity and variety of language games. Where might we find representations of such a form of life, representations suitable for teaching children?

The discovery of a persistent lack in himself, a gap between word and act, ideal and real, is the source of Wittgenstein's subsequent *Philosophical Investigations* (1953). Why, he asked, is 'the most difficult thing of all to not deceive oneself' (1980: 34)? During this crucial, liminal period in his personal and philosophical biography, Wittgenstein lived first in a cottage in Killary fjord in County Mayo, and later in cheap rooms in Dublin's Aisling Hotel, adjacent to Heuston Station. He formulated his new philosophy in Ireland, walking the boreens of Mayo and the streets of Dublin, and his legacy is one we in Ireland

might look to when thinking of reforming our educational system under conditions of globalisation and multiculturalism.

Wittgenstein characterised himself as 'a disciple of Freud', especially of the keystone of Freud's work, *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Like Freud, Wittgenstein thought of his philosophy as looking for a technique of analysis, 'a method to achieve clarity' (Monk, 1990: 297) 'like tidying up a room' (Monk, 1990: 299). Understanding dreams, the working of the unconscious and the nature of language, Wittgenstein saw, has more in common with mythology than with science. Mythological explanations show above all the principle of repetition, recurrence, metempsychosis: the philosophical/political insight that 'this is all a repetition of something that has happened before' (Wittgenstein, in Monk, 1990: 451). Like Freud, Wittgenstein sought 'similes and metaphors that enable the understanding which consists in seeing connections' (Wittgenstein in Monk, 1990: 451). The aim of his philosophy, as Freud's psychoanalysis, is 'to change the aspect under which things are seen so as to illuminate their significance' (Monk, 1990: 531). Like a fly trapped in a bottle, or a neurotic trapped in a pattern, we are trapped in recurring cycles of history – in a 'time loop', recurring series of events culminating in catastrophe, only to begin immediately the same cycle again. Wittgenstein wants 'to show the fly the way out of the bottle' (Wittgenstein, 1994: 309). This 'showing' is not always by the straight path and the clear light of reason. Can someone else be one's teacher in this? Certainly, Wittgenstein says. 'From time to time he gives him the right "tip." This is what "learning" and "teaching" are like here.' What one acquires here is not a technique (such as the model of the Ideal speech act as a measuring rod to gauge and to correct for systematically distorted communication) 'one learns correct judgements' (Wittgenstein, in Monk, 1990: 549).[2]

The kind of educational 'tips' that Wittgenstein has in mind would help children to cultivate 'an eye' for something, or 'an ear' for music, for example, and it is these 'eyes' and 'ears' one needs to cultivate if one is to be able to spot trickery and ideology, but also they are what one needs to be able to appreciate difference and to attune to the voices of others. What we need, and what education needs to cultivate, is not simply – or at least not alone – the Apollonian, reasonable, singular, unambiguous language of reason, but the capacity to attune to a diversity and variety of language games. We can find such 'tips' regarding how to avoid foreclosing the gap between self and Other from Benjamin's respective essays on the

task of the critic and the task of the translator, from what Benjamin calls his 'little tricks of the trade' (1999e: 728) and especially in the pedagogy behind his series of radio broadcasts for children who were already being beguiled by fascist propaganda. What Wittgenstein, Benjamin and Durkheim emphasise as the fundamental principle of pedagogy is that moral education cannot be simply didactic. That is to say, moral education cannot be simply pointedly or narrowly 'instructive'; intended to instil specific moral and cultural values. This is the mistake of 'awareness' and 'sensitivity' approaches that, however well intentioned, and although they have a role to play, are perceived and experienced as being instruction in a new orthodoxy – so-called 'political correctness'. Cosmopolitan education cannot be simply added to the curriculum as something to be learned by rote, as is so much of the substance of Irish education, culminating in the Leaving Certificate. A programme of moral education that would cultivate cosmopolitan values, norms and principles needs to be dialogical, reflexive, critical and imaginative.

BENJAMIN: PEDAGOGY OF THE BEGUILED

Benjamin had a lifelong interest in children's toys and books, and he thought of the adoption of the perspective of the child as one of a number of methodological 'tricks of the trade' for developing a critical perspective. Between 1929 and 1933 Benjamin wrote and broadcast a number of radio programmes for children.[3] In the context of his larger critical conception of modernity in terms of the recurrence and amplification of myth, and the mass media as the primary means of dissemination and propagating mythic consciousness, his broadcasts to children are an exemplification of his principle of using myth against myth. Benjamin sought to use the very means through which the public, adults and children, were becoming beguiled and enthralled by commercial advertising and political propaganda to wake them up from their dream state. At the time Benjamin was making his broadcasts to children, the same airwaves were carrying, or soon would carry, the speeches of Goebels and the Führer. Against the background of the anomie of the Weimar Republic, disintegration and apparent directionlessness, the mass media communicated a variety of hegemonic articulations that purported to suture the Lack and identify the bases of solidity, stability and order: the myth of progress through technology; the myth of happiness and fulfilment through consumption; the myth of destiny and historical coherence; the myth of identity and permanence of blood race and soil; and

myths about the Others who were causing trouble, thieves of national enjoyment, decadents, demoralisers, conspirators – paradigmatically, myths about Jews.

What could Benjamin offer to children that might help to inoculate them against these influences? What might we offer Irish children today to inoculate them against McDonalds, consumerism, xenophobia, and the multiple malign influences circulating in the anomic world of Celtic Tiger Ireland? In Benjamin's own terms his broadcasts might be thought of as little *denkbilder*, toy versions of his theoretical tools. In Wittgenstein's idiom Benjamin was trying to give the children 'tips', trying to tip them off, give them little pointers that would teach them good judgement. Let's look at some examples of his *klein denkbilder*.

Catastrophe, disaster, earthquakes and volcanoes are frequent themes in Benjamin's broadcasts, evoking as they do the sublime and awakening a sense of awe in the face of rupture and unfathomable depth. In other words, the aesthetic images Benjamin selects for his stories literally and metaphorically open up the theme of Lack. One story, for example, concerns a catastrophe, a famous railway disaster in Scotland in the 1870s, when a train crossing a railway bridge over the Firth of Tay plunged into the river, killing all on board. The train is thundering along through the darkness in the midst of a raging storm, and suddenly disappears through a gap in the bridge plunging into the river below. When it doesn't arrive at the other side, and telegraph communications are lost, another train is sent back in the opposite direction, and it too, barely avoids plunging through the same gap in the bridge (Benjamin, 1999f). Benjamin provides no elaborate explanations of the awesome disaster, and barely averted second catastrophe. The story hangs there, inviting interpretations; for example: how iron construction and engineering, the high bridge spanning the broad estuary, the speeding train, represent the modern ideal of progress; how the gap in the bridge represents the precariousness and risk underpinning technology and faith in progress; the break in communication that can have catastrophic consequences; the careful vigilance of the driver of the second train, who seeing the gap in time, averts a second catastrophe.

Another broadcast concerns the forgery of stamps – stamp-collecting being both the interest of the serious collector, and a popular hobby amongst children, as well as a practice implicated in fetishistic consumerism. Benjamin relates how rare and valuable stamps have been faked, to a degree of perfection that even the

best philatelists are duped. Accordingly, it became common practice that collectors only accepted stamps that had been postmarked, and thus certified as authentic. However, the postmark, the stamp of authenticity on the stamp, became a friend of the forgers, as the postmark could be faked, and moreover the postmark could be used to obliterate and mask any small imperfection on the forgery, so that the stamp with the stamp of authenticity may in fact be a fake. Moreover, good forgeries, exemplary pieces, 'absolutely authentic fakes', then began to become collectors' items in their own right, often with a value greater than that of the authentic stamp, and so the game goes merrily on: forgeries of fakes of forgeries and the erosion of the possibility of discerning the real at all – a valuable lesson for today's children subject to the ubiquity of brand-led commodity fetishism.

Another broadcast tells a story about New Orleans bootleggers during American Prohibition:

Young Black boys move alongside a train which has just come to a stop, concealing beneath their clothes containers of various shapes on which may be read in large letters 'iced tea.' After signalling to a vendor, a traveller, for the price of a suit, buys himself one of the flasks, which he adroitly conceals. Then a second one, then ten more, then twenty or fifty. 'Ladies and gentlemen', the Black boys implore, 'wait for the train to leave before drinking your tea.' Everyone winks complicitously … the whistle blows, the train starts up, and all the passengers raise their containers to their lips. But disappointment soon clouds their faces, for what they are drinking is indeed iced tea. (Benjamin, cited in Mehlman, 1993: 8–9)

This story of multiple layers of deception and self-deception, wherein the literal truth – 'iced tea', written on the containers – becomes in fact a lie, shows the lack, the indeterminacy of meaning, even when the thing is in fact 'exactly what it says on the tin'. The Black boys out-fox those who conventionally regard themselves as racially and intellectually their superiors, coming away from the encounter having profited from the whites' prejudice, and having confounded their stereotype, while remaining scrupulously 'truthful' throughout. Benjamin's 'tip' is designed to work simultaneously as a critique of trickery, while redeeming capacities of wit and cunning that children and subaltern groups subject to power may need to appropriate for themselves.

The task of the critic, Benjamin says, is not to give his own opinion, not to pass judgement, but to enable others to form their own opinions and make their own judgements (Benjamin, 1999d: 548). This is the

task of the teacher too. In 'Little Tricks of the Trade' Benjamin says that the art of storytelling entails the storyteller not providing an explanation of the story, but letting listeners themselves explore the multiplicity of possible interpretations. In this way the story does not expend itself, but 'preserves its strength concentrated within itself and is capable of releasing it even after a long time' (Benjamin, 1999e: 729). Such stories, Benjamin says, echoing Aristotle and Heidegger, are still capable of arousing wonder, astonishment and thought after thousands of years. His children's broadcasts are conceived of as enabling in this way.

Are there contemporary approximations of Benjamin's pedagogy? And can they be adopted by educationalists in contemporary Ireland? Let us look briefly at some of the pedagogical broadcasts directed at children in the mythic age of globalisation, stories which are familiar to Irish children as they are to American, German, Lithuanian and possibly to Chinese children too. Two of the most widespread are *Thomas the Tank Engine*, and *Barney*. Both of these, while purporting to be 'educational' rather than mere entertainment, are ideological in the purist sense. They represent reality as a sutured totality. A far cry from Benjamin's hanging story of the railway disaster, the world of *Thomas the Tank Engine* is a seamless network of integrated systems of communication and control where hardworking and dedicated little engines run around on a closed circuit, industriously performing routine tasks and keeping the Fat Controller happy. *Barney*, similarly, represents a sutured totality, but here living children reduced to automatons take the place of the anthropomorphised trains, and go through their paces in synchronised, choreographed set-piece song-and-dance routines, marching to the band, saluting the flag and munching popcorn. Barney purports to teach children 'to use their imagination', but Barney dictates both the content and the form of the children's imaginary. In his 'Program for a Proletarian Children's Theatre' Benjamin emphasises the central importance of improvisation that 'enables the child's gesture to stand in its own authentic space'. 'The kind of "fully rounded" performance that people torment children to produce can never compete in authenticity with improvisation' (Benjamin, 1999c: 204). The child's utopian gesture is a revolutionary decolonisation of the lifeworld, an attempt to reclaim the unpredeterminable space of the Lack and the improvisation that is the true form of play. How children 'mind the gap' is expressed in the widespread practice of 'killing Barney'. Tormented children, trapped in the asinine, cloying totalitarian

state of 'Barney's Imagination Island', appropriate and invert the ideological platitude and sing:

> I hate you, you hate me,
> We're a dysfunctional family
> Then a shot rang out / and Barney hit the floor
> No more purple dinosaur!

Sesame Street is an interesting example of attempts both at multi-culturalism and at the process of 'glocalisation', of the appropriation and transformation of the global by the local. *Sesame Street* originated in the US in 1969, and was one of the first children's programmes to try to positively represent ethnic diversity, with black, Asian, native and other characters all living relatively harmoniously on the same street. A recurring theme song is 'Who Are the People in Your Neighbourhood?', which articulates and celebrates harmonious interdependency and reciprocity of occupational specialisation in the division of labour, the principle of organic solidarity which is crucially important and indispensable for metropolitan multicultural society. While at the time this was a very positive move, as debates on multiculturalism deepen, the representation of multicultural-ism as intrinsically harmonious is increasingly seen as problematic, and as glossing over radical social inequalities amongst members of national and global neighbourhoods, as well as imposing a hegemonic version of white middle-class normality rather than adequately representing radical difference in multiculturalism. While there is much more of an attempt to represent different ethnic cultural practices in *Sesame Street* than for instance in *Barney*, and the earlier versions of this programme were truly ahead of their time, looking back on it antagonism and radical difference are repressed in favour of a peaceful, pleasant neighbourhood. This is a characterisation consistent with contemporary critiques of multiculturalism, which, like Benetton ads or Disney's 'It's a Small World' amusement ride, advocate a vague and purely culturalist notion of cultural 'tolerance' yet depoliticise economics by ignoring radically unequal exchange relations in equally 'respecting' both affluent and poor nations (i.e. uncritical celebrations of polyvocality, heteroglossia, polyidentity, heteronymy and 'inbetween-ness').

As well, the *Sesame Street* emphasis on neighbourhood parallels the process by which this programme has been 'glocalised' by being appropriated, hybridised and localised by nations such as China and

Russia, who have each made their own particular changes to this programme in order to best fit in with the national culture. However, the limits of the capacity to represent radical otherness and social antagonism has been illustrated by a recent attempt (1995) to create a version of *Sesame Street* that was a joint venture between Palestine and Israel. Although it was produced in two different formats, and in two different locations, this collaboration was intended as one means to bridge the gap opened up by the intractable conflict between these two cultures by showing Israelis eating falafels, and going to visit houses in each other's neighbourhoods and so on, although by invitation only. In this instance, the name *Sesame Street* had to be changed to *Sesame Stories* since clearly it was and is untenable to depict Israelis, Palestinians and (more recently) Jordanians mingling freely in shared space. While this process was fraught with problems, i.e. the assassination of Rabin shortly after the bombing of Tel Aviv, the attempt to help children to humanise their historic enemies is animated by a spirit of cultural cosmopolitanism which doesn't falsely reconcile the gap between self and Other, but which could possibly facilitate moments where we can, in Hegel's terms, 'cancel the opposition but preserve the difference'.

Better examples are provided by Dr Seuss stories, which metaphorically and imaginatively illustrate the dialectics of entrenched territorial conflict (*The Zax*), the creation of false needs in consumer societies (*The Sneetches*), the environmental risks of global capital (*The Lorax*), and the vulnerability of local cultures to cultural imperialism (*Horton Hears a Who*). In *The Sneetches* we meet two groups of creatures that resemble one another in every respect except that some 'have bellies with stars' while the others 'have none upon thar's'. The star-belly Sneetches 'look down their snoots' at the plain-bellies, and exclude them from 'ball games and picnics and frankfurter roasts', and the poor plain-bellies are disparaged and socially excluded year after year. Then, one day, along comes Sylvester McMonkey McBean, a 'fix-it-up chappie' with a wonderful machine, that (for a modest fee) puts stars on the bellies of the plain-belly Sneetches. As soon as the significant difference is eliminated, the former elite, the star-belly Sneetches, want to reinscribe the difference again. So Sylvester McMonkey McBean (for an increased fee) puts them through a star-off machine. Now, to have a star belly is a stigma when previously it had been a sign of status. Things spiral wildly out of control:

> All the rest of that day on those wild screaming beaches
> The fix-it-up chappie kept fixing up Sneetches

> Off-again on-again, in again out again
> Through the machines they ran round and about again
> Changing their stars every minute or two
> Until neither the plain or the star bellies knew
> Whether which one was what one or what one was who.

Soon the Sneetches' money is all spent. Sylvester McMonkey McBean packs up his machines and drives away laughing at the foolish Sneetches.

Here is a classic Trickster (Monkey) who enters into a situation where there is latent animosity and potential conflict – racial and ethnic tension, colonial resentment. Trickster's inventiveness, his 'wonderful contraption', disrupts stasis and gets history moving. He stands at the centre of a whirlwind, playing one side off against the other, profiting from the tragi-comedy. The solution he offers is unrestrained consumerism fed by the competitiveness of changing fashions. Will affluence and free-spending bring the new and differentiated Irish together, or will it replicate and intensify social conflict? Dr Seuss concludes the story with the Sneetches, bewildered, bruised and broke, coming to realise that maybe the difference between star-bellies and plain-bellies isn't so important after all. This tale warns of wily opportunists, politicians and entrepreneurs, who, even though they do not actually cause trouble – the trouble between the Sneetches predated the arrival of Sylvester McMonkey McBean – stir up trouble, trouble that can quickly spiral into wild, screaming destruction. Dr Seuss's *The Sneetches* alerts children to the dangers of inequality and social exclusion and the latent potential for conflict and violence such situations engender. McMonkey breaks the historical stasis, sets politics in motion. But the outcome is uncontrollable, and it may as likely end in racial violence as mutual recognition and reciprocity.

In the story called *What Was I Scared Of?* a little fellow walking in the woods happens upon 'a pair of pale green pants, with nobody inside them', and runs away in terror. The representation of Other as an empty pair of pale green pants represents an uncanny gap which defies logic, and captures the terrifying, unfathomable nature of difference that occurs in encounters with a radical Other. Over the next few days and nights, he has more encounters with this unrepresentable Other – walking down the street, running an errand, doing the shopping, exactly the kinds of everyday situations in which one encounters immigrants, minorities, the Other – who takes on an increasingly menacing aspect in the mind of the hero. Eventually

they meet face to face. The little fellow screams, but then he notices that the pale green pants are trembling too – 'it was just as scared as I was'. They are equally strangers and alien to one another, equally lacking, equally vulnerable. And Dr Seuss's conclusion to the story is a remarkable elementary lesson in how to 'mind the gap': he doesn't resolve the difference between the protagonists with a premature or false closure between the one and the Other. He doesn't fill the lack by providing some positive content to 'the pale green pants with nobody inside them'. He preserves the irreducibility of the Otherness of the Other. The boy and the pale green pants don't become best friends, but the story ends with a situation where at least the boy and the pale green pants greet each other when they pass in the street. He cancels the opposition but preserves the difference between the two subjects. They become mindful of one another's presence and the difference between them, and they interact with civility towards one another:

> And now we meet quite often, those empty pants and I
> But we never shake or tremble, we just smile and we say 'Hi'.

Every culture has its own repertoire of stories that give us tips about how to 'mind the gap'. These stories are resources that may help us to mediate the antinomies of difference in the postnational constellation. Ireland has a rich reservoir of lore and a wealth of comedy and irony on which we might build a programme of education, as well as making use of global materials to develop children's critical moral capacities.

What this means in practical terms is that we should not be preoccupied with censoring existing literature or material in favour only of positive representations of minorities that at times promote abstract and sometimes unrealistic images of minorities (as really just like 'ourselves'). This would be the 'add minorities and stir' approach to a multicultural curriculum; the idea that all we need to do is include images of Polish, Nigerian or Traveller people in our textbooks and racism will disappear. This not only denies difference and reproduces homogeneity, but it also leaves the interpretation of what is normal up to the dominant culture, and silences and excludes any debate on what a normal or positive representation might be. Rather, if we really want to establish a cosmopolitan curriculum, we need to facilitate children's opportunity to engage in the hermeneutic exercise of 'taking the role of the Other', to engage in a protracted interrogation of the rich histories, customs, religions and lifeworlds

of our 'new Irish' and, in the process, to relativise and get some distance from the interpretive horizons of their own culture, a goal which involves a much more dialogical, interactive pedagogy than simply censoring negative representations and silencing questions. This cosmopolitan pedagogy should first and foremost be oriented to a curriculum that cultivates independent and critical thought, which will enable them to decide for themselves, and provide children with many opportunities for cultural encounters that will expose them at times to radical Otherness. Children are capable of being infinitely open-minded, it is through exposure to ethnocentric and bigoted societies that they learn otherwise.

Such approaches have been strongly supported in a variety of documents concerning the Irish primary and post-primary school curriculum. For instance, *Intercultural Education in the Post-Primary School* commissioned by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), makes a variety of recommendations designed to promote 'intercultural competence' (Tormay, 2006: ii) through story, metaphor and dialogue, which will hopefully challenge racism and ethnocentrism in both the formal and the 'hidden' curriculum. In the *Guidelines on Traveller Education in Second Level Schools*, the Department of Education and Science has defined intercultural education as aiming to 'raise pupil's awareness of their own culture and to attune them to the fact that there are other ways of behaving and other value systems' and to 'develop respect for lifestyles different from their own so that pupils can understand and appreciate each other' (Ward, 2002: 20). Teachers hoping to implement such recommendations face enormous hurdles in trying to inculcate intercultural sensitivity in classrooms that are already overcrowded while ensuring that the curriculum demands are fulfilled, let alone addressing the problems they encounter in teaching cultural respect while institutionalised inequalities on the basis of race and class are becoming more acute. The best solution in this context of the rapidly changing nature of Irish society and the growing problems that will emerge if opportunistic, exploitative and racist ideologies persist is the creation of a citizenship studies module in the Irish leaving certificate curriculum. Although 'Civic Studies' is currently taught in 2nd level education in Ireland, what is really needed is a more pedagogically and epistemologically radical Citizenship studies such as that Ward describes (2002) as a requirement of the Leaving Certificate level. Detailed proposals for a 'Social and Political Education' course (Ward, 2002) are currently being considered by the Department of Education, but to date, there have been no concrete decisions made in this area.

CONCLUSION

To Habermas cosmopolitanism involves a 'politics of recognition' whereby the identity of each individual citizen is woven together in a stabilised network of collective identities (Habermas, 2001: 74). However, the Habermasian emphasis on clear communications and eagle-eyed reason as a means to cosmopolitanism must be supplemented with the recognition of the chaotic and conflicting desires and the 'multiplicity of subject positions' (Mouffe, 1989: 34) of the political subject. Any such attempts to cultivate a cosmopolitan imaginary must be careful to 'mind the gap' between self and Other, and must recognise the constitutive antagonism of the social – the irreducible particularity of difference that needs to be respected or recognised in terms of its ultimate unrecognisablity. Complete reconciliation, closing the gap, erasing the difference between self and Other, risks bringing about the antithesis of a harmonious, multicultural civil society: 'the antagonism of civil society cannot be suppressed without a fall into totalitarian terrorism' (Žižek, 1989: 5). The only thing one can do is to 'accept this gap, this fissure, for all other solutions are a direct path to totalitarianism' (ibid.). This notion of 'minding the gap' is absolutely essential for a programme of education for the cultivation of cosmopolitanism. It is only by minding the gap that we can imagine a politics of recognition which does not simply domesticate the Other's difference and assimilate the Other, but rather which can deal with antagonism and radical Otherness. This notion of the lack or gap can provide a space for new metaphors and modes of thought that could ground a political imaginary, and could establish new relationships between the universal and the particular, but must also take into account, to use Žižek's formula, the fact that we can only approximate cosmopolitanism when we take into account its very impossibility.

RECOMMENDED READING

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9
Conclusion: A Cosmopolitan Ethics for a Postnational Society

Orienting Questions

- Do we have a good quality of life in contemporary Ireland?
- Is our quality of life better than it had been previously, before globalisation?
- What is quality of life, and how would one measure it and evaluate it?
- What is the relationship between health, wellbeing and quality of life?
- How is quality of life related to cosmopolitanism?

Quality of life is an elusive and paradoxical thing. There is an extensive literature on quality of life and quality of life indicators. It has become central to social policy discourse and to social and community work practice. For some time now macroeconomic indicators such as GNP have become seen to be inadequate measures of a society, and have been supplanted by attempts to measure the social, economic and environmental wellbeing by measuring social capital, quality of life and even happiness. Quality of life has become absolutely central to the discourse and professional practice of planning and sustainable development – in discussions of city planning and rural life, and as our understanding of the environment has been broadened and deepened to encompass such things as community and social networks. Attempts to evaluate national wellbeing take cognisance of the dynamic state of our social, economic and environmental quality of life. The dimensions of life examined typically include education, employment, energy, environment, health, human rights, income, infrastructure, national security, public safety, recreation and shelter. In the domains of medicine and psychology especially, quality of life has been a sort of holy grail for the caring professions. If quality of life can be defined, measured and evaluated then it could revolutionise the basis of clinical decision-making and treatment, for the very ill facing radical medical intervention, for the care of the elderly, for psychiatric patients, for the disabled and so on.

Despite the fact that Ireland has been lauded for having a high quality of life, it seems clear by the evidence presented in this book

that although substantial gains have been made in Irish society through pursuing a neoliberal economic policy, this economic modernisation has been accompanied by a variety of social inequalities and by a strong decline in social cohesion. The fact that Ireland has rapidly transformed from being a semi-peripheral to a rapidly-growing economy in such a short period of time means that it provides an interesting case study with regards to the social gains and costs of globalisation, and perhaps represents a microcosmic example of both the winners and losers of globalisation. One of the central arguments of this book is that despite Ireland's alleged status as one of the wealthiest and happiest nations in the world, there are a number of illnesses, diseases and medical syndromes prevalent in contemporary Ireland that have become public health concerns such as (but not limited to) depression, obesity and binge drinking. These conditions present clinically in terms of individualised symptoms, and they have demographic and epidemiological profiles, yet these diseases also have a sociological profile, one that transcends the particularity of their symptomology and their discrete etiologies. We argue these are diseases related to cultural pathologies of the social body and disorders of the collective *esprit de corps* of contemporary society, manifest at the level of individual patients' bodies: they arise from individual and collective experiences of profound and drastic social changes and cultural shifts, and are integrally related to processes of globalisation. These changes include the experience of accelerated modernisation, the dissolution and reconfiguration of social institutions such as the family, the loss of cherished values and ideals, the flexibilisation of contemporary employment (and the consequent accentuation of performance and mobility) and the disintegration of socialisation, identity-forming and character-building structures. Depression, obesity and binge drinking are also symptoms of the fragmenting effects produced by the global restructuring of industry and the segmentation of the labour market, and are symptoms of the way in which opportunities for collective identity formation and individual self-realisation are made increasingly impossible, for this new organisation of work results in the erosion of the 'accomplishment principle' which leads to a greater sense of status confusion, disorientation and a rise of psychological disturbances (Petersen and Willig, 2004). These illnesses are symptomatic of the present crisis of Irish society arising from extensive and intensive experiences of globalisation, a crisis – or crises – that is simultaneously moral-practical, political and ecological, and that provokes a return to the perennial

and fundamental question, namely, what is our idea of the 'good life' and the possibility of its realisation.

THE CELTIC TIGER AND THE DECLINE OF CIVIC HEALTH: TOWARDS A 'CIVIC CHILDHOOD' MODEL

All these illnesses are also exacerbated by the state of Irish health care, which is currently based on a chaotic and underfunded two-tiered system. The chronic and acute problems of the health care system show the state's inability to introduce universal health care and address long-term problems, and also reveal the limitations of priva-tisation and of a strategy of short-term, crisis management solutions, a myopia that characterises much policy in Ireland today. Despite our alleged prosperity, there are now fewer rather than more acute care beds per capita than in 2001; more untreated illnesses due to the cost of GP visits and medication; an unprecedented fall in medical card numbers; and a systematically underdeveloped primary care system, which makes preventative medicine a rarity; and under-investment in community and long-term care (Tussing and Wren, 2006). This inefficient and unequal health care system produces a dynamic where those who can afford it in Ireland tend to rely on private health care, and those who can't tend to avoid facing health care problems until they reach an acute health crisis condition. As a result of this and a variety of other problems, there is currently an A&E crisis of such magnitude that there are now more, rather than fewer, A&E patients consigned to trolleys while awaiting treatment, and stays on trolleys of up to 48 hours are common (Tussing and Wren, 2006). Despite the boom, Irish health spending has remained consistently low. From 1970 to 1996, Ireland invested on average each year 63 per cent of the average EU per capita capital spend on health. In 1990, health capital spend in Ireland was 38 per cent of the EU average, and the 2003 level of spending relative to EU average, while greatly improved, was still below – about 90 per cent, when it ought to have been over 100 per cent if it were to hope to catch up after decades of low investment and neglect (Tussing and Wren, 2006). Not only has the government spectacularly failed to implement its own policies and promises outlined in its own reports including *Quality and Fairness* (2001), the *Hanly Report* (2003) and the *Primary Care Strategy* (2004), but there are current proposals for a tax relief system amounting to at least 1 billion for at least 18 private clinics, which it is proposed will be built on public land (*Sunday Independent*, 28 January 2006). Wren and

Tussing caution that the current health policy and recommendations favour private practice and patients and mitigate against a health care service provided on the basis of need. In contrast, they argue that the health care crisis will not be addressed unless Ireland progresses towards a universal provision of care on the basis of need, and they suggest that if 10 per cent of current public spending was invested in health, the government could fully implement the health strategy, and substantially reduce current health care problems. Unless this happens, the misguided character of the privatisation strategy will undoubtedly become increasingly clear as the Irish health care and A&E crises become even more acute, and will only serve to accelerate the loss of cohesion and decline in quality of life in Ireland.

Ireland has always claimed to be a nation that values its children. State policy such as the marriage bar, which denied married women access to the labour market and the cultural ideology of the self-sacrificing Mother inherent in Catholic and nationalist discourses (Nash, 1997) have both been justified on the basis that they were good for the family, and specifically for children. We are signatories to the UN Charter of Rights of the Child, an exemplary piece of cosmopolitan legislation, but we blithely ignore our responsibilities to the world community and we deprive some of these children their full rights by deporting the immigrant parents of Irish-born children. Stratification along race, ethnic and class lines contributes to an overall decline in social wellbeing, yet we are actively pursuing neoliberal economic policies in Ireland that are demonstrably reproducing and deepening the gap between rich and poor despite our so-called wealth, and we are systematically eroding health care provision, social welfare and social cohesion. Such erosion will severely limit possibilities for a high quality of life for our children in the future. Already, a recent Combat Poverty survey revealed that one-fifth of Irish children live in poverty for five years or more, and that the proportion at risk of poverty was 21 per cent in 2004, which was one of the highest rates in the EU (Combat Poverty, 2006). Mortality rates amongst the poorest people in Ireland are up to 200 per cent higher than amongst the richest (Institute of Public Health, 18 October 2006). If industry, the state, policy-makers and the civic populace cannot agree on how to balance economic and social progress, or how strategically to ensure a good quality of life, perhaps we can agree that we need at the very least to think of the future welfare of the next generation of children, for as O'Neill points out, children are the least advantaged members of society, yet bear

the brunt of socio-economic risks of globalisation since 'their poverty seriously reduces their life changes of achieving autonomy and freedoms' (O'Neill, 2004b: 12). There is a growing body of empirical evidence by Wilkinson (1996, 2005), Marmot (2004), and Sullivan and Baranek (2002) that demonstrates the strong link between social cohesion and health. 'The crucial evidence on this comes from a discovery of a strong international relationship between income distribution and national mortality rates. In the developed world, it is not the richest countries which have the best health, but the most egalitarian' (Wilkinson, 1996: 3). Others such as Kawachi and Kennedy (2002) have pointed out the link between health defined in medical terms and how overall civic health is greatly improved by social equality and social cohesion. Yet, health care strategy in Ireland is dominated by the privatisation, rather than universalisation, of health care, while the latter – universalisation – is the policy pursued by nations with the highest quality of life. This injurious strategy of privatisation of health care is part of a broader ideology and state policy which favours trade liberalisation, deregulation, rolling back of the welfare state, reducing expenditures on public goods, strict controls on organised labour, and ascribes to a politics that Falk calls 'predatory globalisation' (1999).

At another level, town planning is over-ridden by developer-led urban renewal and housing provision, practices that promote class and ethnic segregation and that support anti-cosmopolitan rather than pro-cosmopolitan lifestyles. For instance, the intensification of class and income segregation within cities, the emergence of on the one hand immigrant ghettoes and on the other exclusive enclaves and 'gated communities' inhibits our opportunities for encountering diversity and for cosmopolitanising encounters. Importing migrant workers to fill labour shortages has greatly benefited the Celtic Tiger economy, yet we opportunistically support a work permit system that accords only limited citizenship rights to many migrant workers, and since the citizenship referendum have severely limited access to citizenship to a degree that Ms Justice Mary Finlay Geoghegan has argued it contravenes both the Irish Constitution and the European Convention on Human Rights Act. As Chapter 3 demonstrates, Irish immigration policy treats migrant labourers as though they were a commodity: encouraging migration to fill labour shortages, but refusing to acknowledge their 'surplus packaging' such as families, ill health and other vestiges of their humanity. The public reaction to O'Brien and King's (2006) recent estimate that one-fifth of people

in the year 2020 will be a foreign immigrant has been predominantly negative; for instance journalist David McWilliams (2006) has argued that such levels of immigration will 'cause' racial tensions by creating a 'largely non-Irish zone' in Dublin, which will seemingly drive what he constructs as the 'true' Irish out of the city. As well, instead of proposing reform that might improve social cohesion, policy response to immigration has been to embrace neoliberal policy that ever-more deeply draws a defining line between 'us' and 'them', and demonstrates a xenophobic and opportunistic response to increased immigration that ironically is reminiscent of the nineteenth-century colonial treatment of the Irish.

The symptoms listed above are all indicators of the crises engendered by the fragmenting effects of globalisation, whereby social cohesion and self-identity have been eroded by new workplace contexts that increase alienation and are inimical to solidarity, satisfaction and a sense of 'communitas', and by growing social inequality and these symptoms are the inevitable outcome of the radical excesses of globalisation. However, what we have tried to demonstrate is that the solution is not a nostalgic or defensive retreat to the religious values of the past, or a closed version of national identity, but rather can be found within secular-humanist values and postconventional morality, which are the foundational principles and aspirational ideals in current conceptions of cosmopolitanism. What we need is a cultural cosmopolitanism rather than increased class and ethnic segregation, not a cosmopolitanism that denounces any particular identity and has pretensions of universalism, but rather a 'rooted cosmopolitanism' (Appiah, 2006: 144). At first, Appiah's concept of 'rooted cosmopolitanism' appears oxymoronic; to have roots implies that one is located within a specific history or culture, yet to be cosmopolitan implies one is rootless, nomadic, a citizen of the world. However, rooted cosmopolitanism is the epistemological capacity to think at a variety of levels, and which 'accepts the multiplicity of roots and branches and that rests on the legitimacy of plural loyalties, of standing in many circles but with common ground' (Cohen, 1992: 480) and is therefore based on a multiplicity of loyalties and frames of reference. Without a deeply felt commitment to the local there can be no genuine sense of obligation to the universal and, moreover, one's local loyalties and experiences provide an experiential basis for the constitution of a postnational or cosmopolitan morality. Similarly, echoing the argument of Durkheim and Joyce's aesthetic image of

the cosmopolitan subject, Leopold Bloom, Bhabha (1996) proposes a 'vernacular cosmopolitanism' that sees from the margins, from the peripheries of global centres of power and wealth, and views globalisation from how it is perceived from below, from a multiplicity of points on the social fabric. He sees the creation of a cosmopolitan episteme, or set of knowledges, that constructs the world for us, 'not as an ongoing process of selecting what is cool and interesting from all the world's traditions, but rather as a montage of overlapping perspectives, experiences, and cultures brought into contact by global migrations of refugees, guest workers, and other subaltern populations' (Tarrow, 2005: 2). Appiah and Bhabha's notions of cosmopolitanism are therefore, like Joyce's, not elitist notions which celebrate the mobility of high-flying global elites, but rather the opposite: they are a moral call for a greater sense of compassion for the sufferings of others and, in particular, those who have been involuntarily globalised, ejected from their homelands, much like the Irish diaspora (Tarrow, 2005). Cosmopolitanism asks us to recognise that migrants and Travellers are, like some of our foremothers and forefathers, struggling to survive and find a workable life.

Thus cultural cosmopolitanism located in a 'rooted' or 'vernacular' cosmopolitanism could form the basis of a way of thinking or subjectivity which challenges the exclusionary aspects of neoliberal globalisation, and could take two forms. For instance, despite the claims of some scholars that Canadian multiculturalism policy was intended both to buy off the compliance of the potential 'third force' of immigrants, and to appease a revitalised Quebec (Peter, 1979), what many scholars agree is that one of the strengths of Canada's multiculturalism policy is its promotion of creative encounters and interchange amongst Canada's ethnic groups. One of the stated objectives of Canada's policy on multiculturalism is 'the government will promote creative encounters and interchange among all Canadian cultural groups in the interests of national unity (*House of Commons Debates*, 8 October 1971). State funding not only must support Irish cultural heritage rooted in the past, such as Irish dancing, language, literature and other forms of traditional culture, but also must be directed towards inventing a new multicultural Irish heritage which is expanded and enriched by the emerging multiculturalism. For instance, in Canada, there are many state-sponsored festivals that are intended to educate and celebrate certain ethnic cultures. As well, the inclusion and expansion of 'citizenship studies' in the post-primary

school education in Ireland may help to improve cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity, and challenge the current climate of mis-information with regards to the practices and traditions of certain ethnic groups. Such policies could help to cultivate (and be cultivated by) more micropolitical elements of cosmopolitan thinking already occurring in Ireland in various immigrant rights, anti-racism, anti-war, feminist and environmentalist movements. Here we draw upon Laclau and Mouffe's notion of hegemony, which envisaged political power as exercised from the bottom up as well as top down, and as residing not simply within institutions but potentially everywhere. Laclau says:

Hegemony is not a type of articulation limited to the field of politics in its narrow sense but it involves the construction of a new culture – and that affects the levels where human beings shape their identity and their relations with the world (sexuality, the construction of the private, forms of entertainment, aesthetic pleasure, etc.). (1985: 189)

This subjectivity could be cultivated and nurtured by actively promoting a revitalised, multicultural rather than monocultural public sphere, which celebrates cultural difference, not simply as something to be consumed, but rather as a strand that contributes to a broader tapestry of our 'new' Ireland.

However, our recommendations are not simply psychological, cognitive and cultural, but rather involve economic and political policy as well. We need to reconceptualise health in societal rather than individualist terms, and go beyond the narrow, bio-medicalised, individualised health solutions we have been pursuing. A radical democratic progressivism must begin with an awareness of the need for both redistribution and recognition. In concrete terms this necessitates a radical re-evaluation of current taxation policy as a necessary step towards redistribution, without which we will not be able to improve our collective quality of life. Without such a redistributive mechanism to combat rising social inequalities, we cannot cultivate cosmopolitanism in Ireland, for the economic and social exclusion of many inhibits the possibility of achieving the civic health of the nation. Another necessary step towards civic health that would take account of the increasing numbers of migrant workers in Ireland would be to expand the current work visa system and labour laws, to adequately recognise migrant labourers through greater cultural inclusion, and to redistribute or expand the limited

citizenship rights accorded to many 'new Irish' labourers under the current visa authorisation system. Most importantly, a more equitable taxation system would allow for an increased level of public spending to overcome the deficits of the current housing, social security and, especially, health care systems.

Rather than defensively reacting to this and reproducing structural racism and other divisions produced by the marketisation of the state, we should instead try to build a 'sustainable civic society' (O'Neill, 2004b: 16), based on the idea of what O'Neill calls 'civic capitalism', which acknowledges the unlikelihood of any alternative to capitalism, yet tries to 'sustain our option of civilising capitalism by defending the civic state as the trustee of fairness, equality and social justice' (2004b: 5). In order to overcome the fragmenting effects of modernity and the difficulty in establishing a consensus or a collective view of the common good, O'Neill argues for the idea of 'civic childhood' as the appropriate goal of capitalism and democracy. As well as orienting our vision to the future, this strategy has the capacity to help us imagine a version of the common good regardless of our differences, since we all love our children (and are capable of not wishing harm to other people's children), and can help orient us to the future, rather than remaining stuck in the perpetual present, or cleaving nostalgically to an imagined past. We must do something more than just avoiding repeating mistakes already made by others – even though we desperately need to learn from such mistakes rather than letting our cities become unliveable due to untrammelled, unsustainable development and exurban sprawl. Specifically, our argument is that collective wellbeing in Ireland can best be achieved by reconceptualising Irish society through the model of social justice premised by Honneth and Fraser's discussion of redistribution and recognition in showing how these social problems can be best understood as pathologies of maldistribution and misrecognition. The need for some mechanism of redistribution in Ireland is clear in the context of the evidence that it is not the richest countries which enjoy the best health, but rather the most egalitarian (Wilkinson, 1996, 2005) and that wellbeing is much more closely linked to social cohesion than economic growth (Marmot, 2004; Kawachi and Kennedy, 2002), especially when such growth, as in Ireland, is accompanied by an increase in social inequality. Our civic health and our children's wellbeing are at stake.

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Notes

CHAPTER 1   ECONOMICS: SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND THE CELTIC TIGER

1. For example the Hungarian Foreign Minister's recent claim that Ireland is the 'main inspiration, model and image' that Hungary looks towards in 'debates about how to preserve national identity in an integrating Europe and a globalizing world' (*Irish Times*, 4 April 2001).
2. Between 1986 and 1994, the number of passengers on the Dublin–London route was twice that of any other European route from the UK (Barrett, 1997: 40; Cronin and O'Connor, 2003: 57).
3. A comparison of GNP with GDP figures demonstrates it is the transnational corporations, rather than the Irish nation, that benefit from corporate tax breaks and are the primary recipient of Irish growth, and over 1/5 of all profits leave Ireland (O'Hearn, 2003: 37).

CHAPTER 2   POLITICS:
CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN IRISH POLITICAL CULTURE

1. 'Globalization Index 2001', *Foreign Policy*, 128, January/February 2002, places the Irish Republic at the top of the list of globalised societies.
2. The tribunals of inquiry are identified by the names of the senior members of the judiciary who have presided over them. The most significant from the point of view of our interest in this book are: (a) the McCracken Tribunal (Judge Brian McCracken); (b) the Moriarty Tribunal (Judge Michael Moriarty); (c) the Mahon Tribunal (Judge Alan Mahon); and (d) the Flood Tribunal (Judge Fergus Flood).
3. Joyce, Ireland's best European, hadn't much time for the US, but without American interest and support Joyce would very likely be unknown. One of Joyce's patrons, Mrs McCormick (nee Rockefeller) was American; American writers and publishers such as Ezra Pound and Sylvia Beach championed and supported him; and most importantly of all, Joyce found his modern urban audience not so much in Europe, and certainly not in Dublin, but in the American metropolis. Metempsychosis is explicated for us by Richard Ellmann, professor of English literature at Emory and several other American universities, as well as at Oxford, who for many years was the world's foremost Joyce scholar.
4. Metempsychosis as a structuring principle of *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* is the specific way in which Joyce appropriates and develops the idea of *ricorso* (Vico, 1999) and 'eternal recurrence' (Nietzsche, 1986). Vico was amongst the most important sources of inspiration for Joyce, providing him with fundamental elements of content (etymology and mythology) and form (the principle of *ricorso*). Nietzsche, a secondary influence for Joyce, echoes Vico in his doctrine of 'eternal recurrence'.

5. Whereas Yeats addresses the general and global, 'a vast image of the *Spiritus Mundi*', Seamus Heaney draws attention to metempsychosis at the level of particular and local. In 'The Tollund Man' (1971) he draws out the resonance of ritual killings for an Earth goddess in Iron Age Denmark with contemporary political violence in Northern Ireland.

6. For such an iconic figure in the symbolic order and imaginative structure of Irish culture, there is relatively little serious scholarship on the Leprechaun. The best academic study is Ó Giolláin (1984). A more playful, but none the less well-researched study is Curran (2000). The majority of other literature on the Leprechaun consists of collections of folklore and stories in which the Leprechaun figures as a character, but without offering an interpretive formulation.

7. Throughout the duration of the tribunal investigations into Haughey and other senior Fianna Fail figures, the Fianna Fail political party has remained in government. In a general election at the height of the tribunal revelations Fianna Fail was returned with a substantial increase in support. More recently, in the 2004 local elections, Fianna Fail suffered heavy losses, but postelection political analysis and commentary indicate that the fall in support is due to dissatisfaction with public health and social security. Corruption and the ongoing tribunals were not mentioned at all as a factor. The main opposition party, Fianna Gael, which presents itself as a party of moral and financial rectitude, and which fought a general election on a campaign platfom of anti-corruption at the height of tribunal revelations of the Fianna Fail party's corruption, was decimated at the polls. Even U2's Bono, widely held to be a paragon of 'the new Ireland', expressed the widely reported affectionate opinion that Haughey was a lovable old rogue.

8. For this and other points about the Leprechaun, I am indebted to Dr Gearoid O'Crualigh, Department of Folklore, NUI Cork.

9. *Tir na nOg*, the Land of Eternal Youth, is the *Nirvana* or *Shangri-la* of Celtic mythology.

10. The Public Information Officer of the Flood Tribunal at Dublin Castle provided this information in a telephone interview with the author during April 2003. During the interview the same official agreed with the hypothesis that the real benefit of the tribunals should not be measured financially, but in terms of political legitimation.

11. According to the IFSC website this is estimated at €300 billion in 2003. The nominal tax rate for companies trading through Ireland's IFSC is 10 per cent, whereas the usual rate of corporate taxation in core EU countries is 35–40 per cent. The actual tax rate paid by transnational corporations and banks whose 'treasury management' is based at the IFSC is in fact considerably lower, as they may avail of a wide variety of additional incentives and legal financial instruments to minimise their tax exposure.

CHAPTER 3   CULTURE: RACE AND MULTICULTURALISM IN IRELAND

1. This notion of world citizenship as opposed to more imperialistic under-standings of the term is a tension that is inherent in what Adorno and

Horkheimer call the 'Dialectic of the Enlightenment' more generally; a dialectical interplay between the emancipatory and totalitarian tendencies inherent within modernity expressed in the Enlightenment imperatives of science and reason, tendencies that have been critiqued more recently under the term 'globalisation'.

2. Quoted in *Shadow Report: First and Second Report on CERD*, January 2005. Pavee Point Travellers Center, available at http://www.paveepoint.ie/ submissions/CerdReportFinal.pdf (accessed 1 March 2007).

CHAPTER 4   CONSUMPTION: GUINNESS, BALLYGOWAN AND *RIVERDANCE*: THE GLOBALISATION OF IRISH IDENTITY

1. Moya Doherty, creator and artistic director of *Riverdance*, interviewed by K. Keohane and D. Kavanagh, Department of Management and Marketing, NUI Cork, 18 March 2005.
2. Johnny Rotten, aka John Lydon from Cork; Elvis Costello, aka Declan McManus from Tipperary; Boy George, aka Alan O'Dowd from Thurles and Morrissey, aka Patrick Morrissey, born to Irish immigrants in Manchester.
3. In Paris, for example, 'the scene' has moved decisively from the Left Bank to the Right Bank, and many of the famous personalities are long-since dead, but there is still, indubitably, a bohemian scene.

CHAPTER 5   DEPRESSION: THE MELANCHOLY SPIRIT OF THE CELTIC TIGER

1. *Irish Health Focus*, Dublin, Voluntary Health Ireland (VHI) editorial, March 2005.
2. *Irish Health Focus*, March 2005. Also, '33% of Dublin women suffer from depression', Dr P. Cullen, in *Growth: The Celtic Cancer*, Dublin: FEASTA, November 2004. Similar estimates are provided by AWARE, The Samaritans, and Irish Psychiatry.
3. Cited by H. McDonald, *Observer*, 21 November 2004.
4. Ireland also suffers a high and increasing rate of car accidents as economic growth outpaces infrastructural development. For a full account see Keohane and Kuhling (2004).
5. O'Cuiv, address to *Comhairle Na Tuaithe* [Conference of the Rural Community], Portlaoise, 19 November 2004.
6. Jones, cited in Ellmann (1977).
7. See *Ulysses*, chapter 9, 'Scylla and Charybdis', wherein Stephen and some of his fellow students are engaged in discussion at the National Library; a vehicle that Joyce uses to give a synthetic review of literary criticism on Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and to provide his own interpretation. There is a very extensive literature/commentary on the Shakespeare–Hamlet– Joyce relation. This discussion is informed primarily by the work of Ellmann.
8. C. Jung, cited in Moussaieff-Masson (1994) and Loeb Schloss (2003).

9. Joyce gave a series of lectures on Shakespeare at the university in Trieste while he was working on *Ulysses*, the first of the series on *Hamlet*. This account of their content is provided by Ellmann (1983).

CHAPTER 6   BINGE DRINKING AND OVEREATING: GLOBALISATION AND INSATIABILITY

1. In Ireland, pressure for the regulation of the liquor trade came from a wide variety of sources and interests: the police and the military of the colonial regime, as shebeens and taverns were dens of sedition; the churches, Church of Ireland (Protestant) and others, especially the Methodist Temperance Movement but also, and increasingly, the Catholic church as it gained ascendancy after Catholic Emancipation in 1829. Allied to the ascendant Catholic church, the constitutional nationalist movement fell under the banner 'Ireland Sober Is Ireland Free'. The armed insurrectionary movements, the Fenians and Irish Republican Brotherhood, also promoted regulation and temperance, as a drink-sodden populace was docile and information was easily bribed by drink and intelligence gathered from 'loose talk' in the tavern. Temperance was strongly supported by utilitarian and reformist interests in the cities, and by the city fathers of merchants, professionals and proprietors interested in programmes of social improvement, medical lobbies, social hygiene and public health.

2. No sooner had the licensing laws of the 1870s been institutionalised in Ireland than they came under pressure and began to be eroded. This was mainly due to the proliferation of licences, a phenomenon fed by several sources: unlicensed traders (of which there were several thousand in Dublin alone) sought to regularise their trade and move upmarket or be shut down and forced out of business; economic restructuring and rationalisation of agriculture meant that displaced peasants swelled the populations of towns and cities, increasing the clientele for the liquor trade. Rather than subdivide farms, second sons of prosperous farmers were helped into the licensing trade as a profession. The proliferation of licences and the swelling of the population in towns resulted in anxiety about an upsurge in alcohol problems, alcoholism, crime and public order.

3. Economic transformation of the 1870s and 1880s was a time of rapid modernisation in Ireland, where agricultural small-holdings were consolidated into economic modern farms and their cottiers evicted, who then migrated to the towns and cities, of Britian and North America primarily, but also Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Galway. Ireland was non-industrial though still modernising, and during this time new occupations and trades emerged in the towns, such as clergy, police and military, clerks and administrators, shop assistants, porters and bar staff. Rather than subdivide the land amongst sons, a second son went into the priesthood, or was set up as a publican, a practice which also helped ensure a 'better class' of farmer. The numbers of sons of prosperous farmers who went into the licensing trade in this fashion was quite substantial, if we take

as evidence the number of prominent Dublin pubs at the turn of the twentieth century which were owned and run by publicans from the country, and not from the impoverished west of Ireland, but from the agricultural heartland, the 'golden vale' of Tipperary and from the east midlands and the Shannon basin. With the great and rapid increase in numbers entering the licensed trade, and the swelling numbers of migrants to the city, there was a resurgence/increase in drink related social costs.

4. Though unlike provisions, clothing or ironmongery, the alcohol trade has long been recognised as standing in need of regulation due to the potential social costs associated with alcohol consumption.

5. The neoliberal deregulation of alcohol controls is accompanied by an increase in supply, including a proliferation of new alcoholic products and combination products, with associated amplified advertising, publicity and product positioning.

6. In the annals of management and marketing a (possibly apocryphal) tale is told of how a company increased the sales of its product – toothpaste – by 30 per cent overnight, by simply widening the apperture of the toothpaste tube. The increase in alcohol consumption and the emergence of the problem drinker (as well as the rising fortunes of the alcohol industry and the swelling coffers of alcohol tax revenues) in Ireland are fundamentally similar.

7. Similarly, in Cork, Guinness's great rival, the Beamish brewery, paid fully one-sixth of the total corporation rate for the city in the mid-nineteenth century, and was the main benefactor of everything from model artisans' housing schemes and charitable foundations to the art gallery and the local university.

CHAPTER 7   SOCIAL WELFARE AND REDISTRIBUTION:
TAXATION AND CIVIC HEALTH

1. 'Switzerland, Not Middle East Is Scene of Global Crisis', *Sunday Tribune Business*, 30 July 2006.

2. Brophy, C. 'Has Ireland Backed the Wrong Tech Horses?' *Sunday Tribune, Business*, 30 July 2006.

3. All of this material cannot be reviewed thoroughly here, but it is worthwhile to explore the resonances of the iconic representation of Marianne with the deep origins of the ideas of the household and the gift relation.

4. Hospitality is a sacred duty in most of the world's religions, a universal value and obligation. In the world's religions gods frequently appear on earth as strangers, impoverished and in need of charity, and reward those who are hospitable. Hospitality is one of the five obligatory offerings of all Hindus. In Buddhism hospitality has favourable karmic consequences. Hospitality – charity towards strangers and unfortunates – is one of the principle ethical duties of all Muslims. In the Judaeo-Christian tradition the theme appears throughout the Old Testament and is one of, if not indeed *the* central teachings of Christ. From Biblical times to the present day hospitality is a defining quality of the good

life and the sacred duty of the religious community, exemplified by monastic hospitality in the Middle Ages from which are also derived the traditions of the hostel, hospital and hospice. The hospice retains today an exalted place in the imaginative structure of economies of charity, being most worthy because giving hospitality to the dying reduces to nil the rule of obligatory reciprocity. Hospitality is one of the basic virtues of monastic life. St Benedict's *Rules* states: 'All guests who arrive should be received as Christ, for he himself will say *I was a stranger and you took me in*' (Matthew 25: 35). But this was not without limits. St Basil's *Rules* states that guests could be a burden, and whereas they should be made welcome, hospitality towards them must not interfere with the rules of the religious community. And from the *Rule of the Master* (from which other *Rules* were derived): 'After two days guests were to be put to work, or sent on their way'; and moreover, members of the religious house (Brothers/Sisters) were assigned 'to keep watch on them every night, to ensure the protection of the goods of the monastery'.

5. Vesta's virgins are not to be taken advantage of. Hospitality must not be abused, and taxes must be paid. While it was the sacred duty of the primordial household to extend hospitality to the refugee, the rites and sacrifices to Hestia were human sacrifices: trespassers and scavengers on the cultivated lands of the household, and at other sacred festivals to Hestia the wild people were ritualistically whipped and stoned away from the fields and settlements of civilisation.

6. But the bloody rites of Hestia/Vesta indicate that there are strict limits and obligatory expectations of reciprocity. The festival of Hestia/Vesta wherein trespassers on the cultivated fields were hunted down, enclosed in a pen (sty) and ritualistically slaughtered/sacrificed, gives clear testimony of this bare fact: that charity begins – and ends – at home.

7. Global corporations in Ireland pay from 12 per cent to as low as 5 per cent tax. The EU standard is between 30 per cent and 40 per cent. Meanwhile, fully one-third of all Irish employees are taxed at the maximum rate of 42 per cent and pay VAT at 21 per cent, as well as a wide range of indirect and stealth taxes.

CHAPTER 8   EDUCATION AND RECOGNITION:
THE CULTIVATION OF A COSMOPOLITAN IMAGINARY

1. See Berman's (1985) interpretation of Mephistopheles saying to Faust that he should try to become a '*mensch*' ('a decent human being' in Yiddish vernacular) rather than aspiring to become an '*Ubermensch*'.

2. And this is why 'tipsters' such as journalists, artists, intellectuals and 'rootless cosmopolitans', along with gypsies and homosexuals and embodiments of uncertainty, are amongst the first to be disappeared and sent to the camps in totalitarian projects.

3. Thirty of these scripts survived amongst Benjamin's papers in Paris. Benjamin was somewhat ambivalent about the status of his radio broadcasts. They were a source of income to him, and though he badly needed the money he tended to disparage this pecuniary interest and was somewhat self-deprecating about his work.

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